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A

ROUGH SKETCH

OF

MODERN PARIS.

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A

ROUGH SKETCH

OF

MODERN PARIS;

OR,

LETTERS

ON

SOCIETY, MANNERS, PUBLIC CURIOSITIES, AND AMUSEMENTS, IN THAT CAPITAL.

WRITTEN DURING THE LAST TWO MONTHS OF 1801 AND THE FIRST FIVE OF 1802.

J'ai voulu voir Paris; les fastes de l'histoire
Célébrent ses plaisirs, et consacrent sa gloire.

VOLTAIRE.

Nous avons vu Trajan, Titus et Marc Aurele,
Quitter le beau séjour de la gloire immortelle,
Pour venir en secret s'amuser à Paris.
Quelque bien qu'on puisse être, on veut changer de place;
C'est pourquoi les anglois sortent de leur pays.
L'esprit est inquiet, et de tout il se lasse;
Souvent un bien heureux s'ennuie en Paradis.

IDEM.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, IN ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD:

1803.

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PREFACE.

IN june, 1801, while the war between England and France still continued, I obtained his majesty's license to visit the latter country, in order to ascertain my claims to a legacy left me at Paris. A french passport was likewise necessary; and such were the difficulties which occurred, that, notwithstanding repeated applications to M. Otto on the subject, the instrument in question was not yet arrived, when, on the first of october, an extraordinary gazette announced the joyful intelligence of the signature of preliminary articles of peace. The jealousy of the french government ceased with the war; and, three days after its termination, I received the long expected passport.

10017

BEING one of the first englishmen who arrived in France, after a war big with such unparallelled events, I determined to keep a journal of my proceedings. The object which, at first, induced me to do so, was simply to gratify the curiosity of an intimate friend, who had charged me, on leaving England, to forward to him, by every opportunity, detailed accounts of modern France. Of my correspondence, thus begun, I took regular copies; and, on perusing the materials which I had been able to collect, it afterwards occurred to me, that some of these letters might become not totally uninteresting to the public, if formed into a less objectionable shape, and freed from the many little occurrences, which they originally contained, and which only related personally either to my friend or myself. From this collection I have accordingly culled the following letters. I offer them to my readers, as conveying not a studied view of society and manners, but a rough landscape, drawn by the untutored hand of an inexperienced artist. If the sketch should happen to please, the merit

will be less in the execution than in the subject; if it fail, the fault will be in the pencil, and not in the accuracy of the drawer.

To divest myself, as much as possible, from every prejudice, has been a duty which I have strictly endeavoured to fulfil; yet I fear, such is the effect of early habit, that many marks will still be discovered of national predilection. I beg leave, as a check against faults of this kind, which I may have involuntarily committed, to request my reader to remember, that the observations now laid before him, are those of a man accustomed to english opinions, english society, and english manners. In judging of another country, a foreigner cannot help making a comparison between what he has known at home and what he sees abroad. In doing so, the partiality, which he naturally entertains for his own customs, may lead him to condemn, as faults, what may be simply deviations from the former. That such is the general bias of the human mind, I am fully aware, and I cannot flatter my-

self that mine has escaped it. This consideration must plead my excuse with the french, if I should sometimes appear severe; and the same ought to prevent my countrymen from placing too implicit a confidence in my judgments, where it may be my misfortune to condemn. My hand has faithfully drawn what my eye beheld; but the sight may be jaundiced, and, in that case, the picture will be incorrect.

To conclude—The intention of this work being simply to describe the internal situation of the french capital, all religious and political discussions will be avoided. The causes, events, and consequences of a revolution, which has no parallel in history, I leave to abler and more experienced writers. To point out to strangers the objects most interesting at Paris, to convey some previous information to those who intend going thither, and to lay before such as are prevented, by their other occupations, from undertaking the journey, an account of the pleasures, festivals, buildings, and mode of living in that metropolis, is the task I have

undertaken, a task which, however comparatively humble, is neither useless nor unimportant. Had it fallen into other hands, the public would feel the truth of this remark. As it is, I fear they will easily discover, that the subject deserved an abler pen.

THE AUTHOR.

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A

ROUGH SKETCH

OF

MODERN PARIS.

LETTER I.

Reflections on landing at Calais.—Custom house officers, municipality, commissaires, Dessein's, theatre.—Montreuil.—L'hôtel d'Angleterre at Amiens.—Chantilly.—State of the roads.—Difficulty of getting lodgings at Paris.—M. Peregaux.

Paris, october the 30th, 1801 (4 brumaire, ann. 10.)

MY DEAR SIR,

AT length, arrived in this celebrated city, I execute my promise in commencing a correspondence, which, on my part, shall in future be strictly confined to the curiosities of the place. As I have been only three hours at Paris, I shall in this first letter speak of nothing but my journey. On the 26th of october, I left the York house, at Dover, (of which Payne is still the civil landlord); and embarking at one o'clock on board a neutral vessel, which I was compelled to hire, no english packet boat being yet allowed to enter the ports of France, found myself, after a safe and pleasant passage, at four, on the continent. Though I have before crossed the Chan-

nel, and in as rapid a manner, I was forcibly struck by the wonderful and almost magical change of situation which this short voyage had effected. Rising at my usual hour, I had breakfasted, and walked about the streets of Dover, surrounded by english faces and english customs. The sun had not yet set, and I was now in a foreign country, and that country so lately the enemy of mine, and the seat of such extraordinary and many coloured events. I had changed a monarchical for a republican government. I saw a different people, different dresses, and different countenances, and I was subject to different laws, and different customs.

As soon as the vessel entered the port of Calais, two custom house officers came on board, in a military uniform (for every *fonctionnaire public* has here a regimental dress); and, after taking the names of the passengers, one of them retired, to make his report at the municipality, while the other stayed to prevent our landing, till the return of his companion. In the mean time, the *jetée*, or pier, was crowded with spectators, the greater part of whom were military men, of different ranks and different descriptions. They seemed highly amused in staring at the dresses of the ladies, and in examining the body of my carriage, which was hung on the deck of the ship; while we were equally entertained with the great *moustaches* of the gre-

nadiers, the wooden shoes of the peasants, and the close caps of the *grisettes*.

At length, *monsieur de la Douaine* returned. We were permitted to touch the territory of the republic; and, conducted by a guard of Bourgeois (who, in their dress, rather resembled the ragged regiment of Terence, than the renowned warriors of France), we proceeded to the custom house, from the custom house to the *municipality*, and from the *municipality* to the *commissaire's*.

After undergoing examinations at each of these offices, delivering our passports, and giving up our pocket books and letters (which were returned the following day), we were at last permitted to retire to our inn, the tattered guard, which accompanied us from the ship, having been previously dismissed. At six o'clock, I sat down to an excellent dinner, at the celebrated hotel, formerly kept by Dessein, who is now succeeded by his nephew, Quillacq, a very respectable man, who met me at landing, and, with the utmost civility and attention, took charge of my carriage, baggage, &c. I wished to have set out the following morning for Paris, but I was informed that this was impossible, as, though I brought with me a passport from M. Talleyrand, it was necessary to have this exchanged for one of the mayor of Calais, which latter could not be delivered till late the following

day. I accordingly passed tuesday in this town, which gave me an opportunity of visiting the theatre, which is still at Dessein's. To the best of my recollection, there is no alteration in the building since the war; and, from the darkness of the house, I am inclined to think, that even the painting has not been changed. The actors are not very good, yet better than the generality of our country performers in England. The house was full, and the company well dressed. In short, this amusement may be considered as a very pleasant resource for travellers detained at Calais, either by contrary winds, or by delays in the delivery of passports.

On wednesday morning, Mrs. —— and myself proceeded with post horses. We found the roads very bad, particularly near Boulogne; and, if our conveyance had not been particularly easy, we should have suffered very severely from the fatigues of the journey. It is necessary to add, that numerous workmen were employed in every part of the roads in repairing and amending them. Probably, therefore, before next summer, the communication between the two principal cities of Europe will be restored to its former excellence. At present, the roads have rather the appearance of leading to some deserted village, than to the capital of *la grande nation*. The post horses are active and well-

fed, their drivers civil, and the expense moderate *.

Though we left Calais at break of day, and did not stop either to breakfast or to dine, we did not reach Montreuil, where we proposed sleeping the first night, till sunset. Here we found excellent accommodations, at the inn celebrated by Sterne. The house has, indeed, nothing to recommend it, in point of outward show; and, in this respect, differs entirely from the generality of french hotels: but if comfortable beds, superiorly good cooking, and the smiling attention of two very pretty girls, who act as waiters, are any attractions, I can safely point out this inn, as one at which my countrymen will do right to stop.

From Montreuil we proceeded the next day, through a fine country and bad roads, to Amiens. The cultivation seemed good, and in the villages through which we passed, the peasants were well clad. In the towns, the number of beggars was as great as formerly. At every post, we were surrounded with the old, the blind, and the lame; some of whom, not satisfied with vociferating their complaints, actually climbed up the springs of the carriage, and put their faces

* Three horses and a post boy cost six livres, or five shillings per post. The post is of two leagues, or five miles english.

within the windows, more effectually to draw our notice.

The waiters, post boys, and landlords, were every where remarkably civil, and all expressed their joy at seeing once again amongst them "*les milords Anglois*," by which title they have not forgotten to call, and to tax accordingly, all english travellers. The people appear to me not only civil, but respectful, and infinitely more so, than before the revolution. The reason is plain, the old *noblesse* treated their inferiors with a degree of familiarity, which produced in the latter a mode of speaking, that, to an english ear, seemed highly offensive, but which the french permitted, because they could check it at their pleasure. The loss of their rank has now compelled the higher classes to command respect by a distance of manner, which has of course produced a similar conduct in the persons beneath them.

At Amiens, we drove to "l'hotel d'Angleterre," where we were magnificently and miserably lodged. Fine rooms, superbly furnished; windows and doors, which would neither keep out the rain nor wind; bad fires, and a worse supper, formed the complete picture of a french inn, and the colouring of extravagant charges was not omitted.

Starved with cold and hunger, we left Amiens by break of day, on friday morning; and after

travelling through a country, the beauty of which increased every step with the increasing badness of the roads, we at length reached Chantilly, not a little pleased at having escaped the dangers of a broken neck. At the post office, which is a new inn, built since the revolution, directly fronting the park of the *ci-devant château,* we found good beds, and a comfortable supper, prepared by the kind attention of some english friends, who had preceded us on the road.

The following morning (the 30th), we visited the ruins of this once magnificent spot. If we had had often reason, during our journey, to deplore the destructive effects of that mistaken spirit of pretended philosophy, and pretended patriotism, which had levelled with the ground the churches and country seats, the ruins of which reminded us, in every village, of the excesses committed during the revolution; we made these reflections with double force, and double regret, in viewing what was once the palace of Chantilly. The principal building is entirely pulled down; but *le petit château,* and the superb edifice of the stable, still remain. This latter was saved by the orders of the present government, who forbade its being sold; and the mistress of the inn, with tears in her eyes, acquainted me, that had Bonaparte been at the head of public affairs six months sooner, the palace also would have been rescued from

destruction. That extraordinary man visited Chantilly after the sale, but before the demolition of the building. He heard that the purchaser had ordered it to be pulled down—he expressed his regret; but, at that time, he had no means of preventing what he sincerely deplored.

The stables, though unhurt, are neglected and dirty. They contain, at present, a regiment of cavalry. The woods have also been greatly thinned; the garden no longer exists; and, altogether, Chantilly presents rather the picture of decayed magnificence, than that of actual beauty.

On leaving this once celebrated place, we found a fine paved road all the way to Paris. The regular avenue of hills, the rich country, the vineyards, the villas, and the carriages of all descriptions which we met, announced an approach to the capital, at the gates of which we arrived at two o'clock.

Here, and at Boulogne, we were asked very civilly for our passports, which were instantly returned us. These were the only interruptions or examinations which we experienced, during the whole of our journey. Carriages are not stopped, as formerly, at every town, to be searched for contraband goods, but, *en revanche*, turnpikes are numerous and expensive. The inns are nearly as dear as those of England; and it is now not less necessary, than under the *ancien régime*, to make a previous bargain, before the

horses are taken from the carriage. If this is not done, impositions and disputes are sure to occur.

On arriving at Paris, I drove to several hotels, before I could get accommodated at all. I am now wretchedly lodged, and fear, from what I have already seen and heard, that I must waste a considerable portion of valuable time, before I shall obtain such apartments as I wish. Good rooms are very scarce, many of the *hôtels garnis* having been unfurnished during the revolution, and those which remain being nearly filled with foreigners, who, since the peace, have flocked hither in great numbers, from every nation of the world.

Persons, intending to visit Paris, ought to write some days before hand to their correspondents, if they desire to be comfortably lodged on their arrival.

Adieu, my friend. I have now given you a full account of my journey. I say nothing of Paris, or its inhabitants, the only person I have yet seen being M. Peregaux, my banker. His new dignity of *senateur* has made no alteration in his conduct. He is as civil, and as obliging, as ever.

As soon as I have seen any thing worth communicating, I shall write again. In the mean time, I take my leave. And

Am, &c.

LETTER II.

The palace and gardens of the Thuilleries.—The Louvre.—The *musée central des arts*, or picture gallery.—*Maria Cosway*.—Gallery of antiquities.—Apollo Belvidere.—Laocoon.—List of pictures.

Paris, november the 6th, 1801 (15 brumaire, an. 10.)

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING in my last letter given the details of my journey, I shall proceed to speak in this of what I have already seen at Paris. The first objects of curiosity to which my steps were directed, were of course the Thuilleries and the Louvre. Of the garden of the former it is difficult to say any thing at this unfavourable season of the year. It appears, however, to have undergone but little alteration, and to have received the additional ornament of several statues, which are scattered about the grounds. The château or palace of the Thuilleries is also unchanged in that part of it which faces the garden, but the appearance of the great front, (I mean that towards the Carousel,) is much improved, and has become strikingly magnificent. It promises to be still more so, when the whole of the projected amendments are completed. When I last visited Paris, a number of small houses surrounded the palace, and seemed to conceal it from the profane eye of the vulgar.

The greater part of these houses are already pulled down, and the gallery of the Louvre, no longer kept from view, forms a magnificent side to the spacious court by which the palace is approached, and in which the first consul reviews his troops, on the 15th of every month. This court is separated from the street, by a beautiful iron railing, the four gates of which are ornamented with the celebrated horses taken from Venice, and with the birds (I believe cocks) which, in imitation of the roman eagles, the french republic has adopted as her distinguishing symbol. The opening is already extended as far as *la rue St. Nicaise.* Houses are daily pulled down, and I understand it is the intention of the present government to clear away all the remaining obstacles, which separate the palace of the Louvre from that of the Thuilleries. When this great plan is fully executed, the residence of the first consul will greatly exceed in magnificence all the palaces of Europe.

In the Louvre is situated the museum or *musée central des arts.* This superb collection, without exception the finest in the world, occupies a room equally unrivalled, covering a space at least equal to a quarter of an english mile. The antichamber* to this vast gallery, is at pre-

* The room in question has, since this was written, been converted to a better use. Vide LETTER XX.

sent filled with a modern exhibition of paintings, which, indifferent in themselves, become still more contemptible by an involuntary, though perhaps unfair, comparison, which one is led to make between the artists of our times, and those of our ancestors. An excellent likeness in full length of madame Bonaparte, and a beautiful miniature of a *father and a son*, by *Isabey*, were the only objects which attracted my attention. My impatience soon carried me forward. At length I found myself in the magnificent room, which I have before mentioned, the walls of which are covered as far as the eye can reach with the sublimest efforts of human art. Where the mind has long been promised a pleasure, when fancy has dressed it in all her choicest colours, how seldom does the reality approach the phantom of heated imagination. For once I was not disappointed. I expected it is true, a high gratification. I had formed to myself an exalted idea of the objects, which I was about to visit, yet the satisfaction I felt exceeded, far exceeded, what I supposed it possible for the power of sight to afford; nor did I believe that the hand of man was capable of attaining that degree of perfection, which I now beheld. For some time I was lost in wonder, I knew not where to fix my enraptured eye. A catalogue which was offered me, by one of the attendants, and which as I afterwards found, is drawn up with great clear-

ness and precision, roused me from this pleasing reverie, and gave some order to the train of my thoughts. The arrangement of the collection is admirable.

After viewing the masterpieces of la Sueur, le Brun, Nicolas Poussin, and the three Van Loos, I supposed I had already seen the utmost efforts of the art, and even, under this supposition, was ready to allow that my highest ideas of the power of painting fell short of what these specimens presented. Think of my surprise, when, looking on my catalogue, I found that I had not yet passed the limits of the french school. Astonished and delighted I went on. The flemish, dutch, and german masters occupy the second division. Among them I beheld the exquisite works of Van Dyck, of Hans Holbein, of Paul Potter, of Rembrant, of Teniers, and of Rubens. Sublime as were the first objects that had claimed my admiration, even they were exceeded by the latter. Nor had I yet seen the acme of the art. Charmed with the fancy and execution of all the flemish painters, I was particularly pleased with the beautiful pasturage, by Paul Potter, every object of which seems alive on the canvass.

A few steps would bring me in view of the wonders of Italy, to see which so many of my countrymen had crossed the Alps; yet so enraptured was I with the objects already before me, that it required all the importunity of my com-

panions, to persuade me to proceed. I was soon rewarded for this temporary sacrifice, and in contemplating the almost supernatural works of Corregio, of Caravaggio, of the Carracci, of Dominichino, of Guido, of Leonardo da Vinci, of Paul Veronese, of Raphael and of Titian. I discovered, that what I had seen before were only so many links in the great chain of perfection, which was now complete. If among these models of the art, you wish me to name some particular picture, I should give the preference to the communion of St. Jerome, by Dominichino, which in expression, colouring, feeling, and variety, seems to me to possess every beauty united.

Before I quit a subject so interesting in every respect, I ought to mention, that this assemblage of the *chefs-d'œuvre* of former times, begins already to hold out the promise of improving the taste of modern painters. I saw artists of both sexes, occupied in taking copies of the most celebrated subjects; and as curiosity led me to observe some of these unfinished attempts, I discovered, with infinite pleasure, that the figures, and even the countenances of the most striking objects, were in several instances successfully imitated. It is indeed, almost impossible, that the study of such unrivalled works should be pursued, without considerable benefit to the individual, and improvement to the art. To me it appears highly probable, that, assisted by the great facilities and

advantages which this gallery affords, painting will, in the course of twenty years, recover all its former splendour.

An english lady*, who has long very deservedly enjoyed a considerable portion of public praise, is now employed in copying the principal pictures in the museum; and from her designs, prints are to be published, the proposals for which are already circulated at Paris. If she should execute her plan as well as one has reason to expect from her known talents, the collection will become highly valuable and interesting, not only to those who have seen the originals, but likewise to such as have not had that advantage.

The *musée*, like every other establishment of the kind in this town, is conducted on principles of liberality, truly honourable to the government and the nation. The gallery is open to foreigners and artists, every day of the year; but to the

* Maria Cosway. Her plan is to follow the arrangement of the gallery, and to devote one copper-plate to each of the fifty-seven grand divisions or compartments, of which it at present consists, engaging to continue her work, as the collection shall be increased. The size of the copper-plate is to be twenty-one inches high, and seventeen wide. The numbers are to appear monthly, and each is to contain two engravings, with an historical description of the subjects, and the artists, by J. Griffiths. Didot the elder, in the Palais royal, receives her subscriptions. Coloured proofs cost thirty-six livres, and plain ones twenty-four.

public, only once or twice in each week. No fee or recompense is either required, expected, or received by any of the attendants; and the exquisite pleasure of contemplating these sublime pictures, for which indeed it would be difficult to fix any adequate price, is enjoyed gratuitously*.

The gallery of antiquities, containing statues, busts, and basso-relievoes, is immediately under the gallery of pictures. It is divided into *la salle des saisons, la salle des hommes illustres, la salle des Romains, la salle de Laocoon, la salle de l'Apollon, et la salle des Muses.*

Were I to attempt an account of all these statues, my letter would never end. I shall therefore only mention those which render the rest, however excellent, petty, and contemptible, in comparison with them. I mean the *Apollo*

* I ought perhaps to mention, that judges of painting have frequently, in my hearing, complained of the double light in which the pictures are seen in this gallery. Individually speaking, I was always during the very many times when I visited this museum so amused, and so delighted, that I had no inclination to criticise; but it is certainly true, that on some days the pictures were seen to greater advantage than on others. The windows of the gallery are directly opposite to one another, and the paintings are hung on the piers between them. The glare which this circumstance produces, is the cause of the objection I have named.

Belvidere, and the *Laocoon**. These masterpieces of human ingenuity are also so well known, and have been so well described, that I shall confine my remarks to their present state and present situation. The *Apollo* seems to have received no injury from the journey, and has as just claims as ever to the preeminence which, for so many centuries, has been allowed it. Did I not fear to appear presumptuous in hinting at any defect in a statue, esteemed so perfect, I should say, that the ancles were rather too thick, in proportion to the rest of the leg, and to the general lightness of the figure. I should have concealed my criticism, if a friend, on whose judgment and knowledge I can rely, had not assured me, that the objection was not novel, and that many connoisseurs have suspected that the legs are modern.

Not having had the happiness of seeing this wonderful statue in Italy, I cannot draw a comparison between the spot where it formerly stood, and that which it at present occupies. I certainly think, that it is not now seen to the greatest advantage. The room is not either high or large enough for the purpose, and too many statues are crowded together.—The Apollo Bel-

* Next to the Apollo and the Laocoon, the most celebrated statue is the Dying Gladiator, the copies of which are dispersed over almost every country in Europe.

videre stands between the *Venus d'Arles* and another female figure, within a railed space of no great dimensions. The catalogue gives the following history:

" No. 145. APOLLON PYTHIEN,
DIT APOLLON DU BELVIDERE.

(After describing the statue and the subject).

" Cette statue la plus sublime de celles que le tems nous ait conservées, a été trouvée, vers la fin du quinzième siècle, à *Capo d'Anzo*, à douze lieues de Rome, sur le rivage de la mer, dans les ruines de l'antique Antium, cité célébre et par son temple de la Fortune, et par les maisons de plaisance, que les empereurs y avaient élevées à l'envi, et embellies de plus rares chefs-d'œuvres de l'art. Julius II, n'étant encore que cardinal, fit l'acquisition de cette statue, et la fit placer d'abord dans le palais qu' il habitait près l'église de Santi Apostoli. Mais bientot après étant parvenu au pontificat, il la fit transporter au *Belvidere* du Vatican, où depuis trois siècles elle faisait l'admiration de l'univers, lorsqu'un héros, guidé par la victoire est venu l'en tirer, pour la conduire et la fixer à jamais sur les rives de la Seine.

. . . . . .

" On ignore entierement le nom de l'auteur de cet inimitable chef-d'œuvre. L'avant-bras

droit et la main gauche qui manquaient ont été restaurés par Giovanni Angelo da Montorsoli, sculpteur élève de Michael Ange."

TRANSLATION.

" THE PYTHIAN APOLLO,

CALLED

" THE APOLLO BELVIDERE.

" This statue, the most sublime of those which time has preserved, was found, towards the conclusion of the fifteenth century, at *Capo d'Anzo*, twelve leagues from Rome, on the sea shore, near the ruins of the ancient Antium, a city no less celebrated for its temple of Fortune, than for the elegant seats, which the different emperors, emulous of each other, had built here, and ornamented with all the rarest works of art. Julius II, while yet but a cardinal, bought this statue, and placed it first in the palace where he resided, near the church of the Holy Apostles. When he became sovereign pontiff, he ordered it to be conveyed to the Belvidere of the Vatican, where for three centuries it excited the admiration of the universe. A hero, guided by victory, drew it from the Vatican; and, transporting it to the banks of the Seine, has fixed it there for ever.

. . . . . .

" The name of the artist, who made this inimitable chef-d'œuvre, is unknown. The right arm,

and the left hand, which were wanting, were restored by the sculptor, *Giovanni Angelo da Montorsoli*, pupil of Michael Angelo."

I hope, my friend, you admire the modesty with which it is declared, that the Apollo is for ever fixed on the banks of the Seine!—After the singular fate which this statue has experienced, it required all that happy confidence, with which the french determine the most difficult questions in their own favour, to make so bold an assertion. The Apollo lay two thousand years under the ruins of Antium, and yet preserved its beauty. It was drawn thence, placed in the Vatican, and after receiving there, for three centuries, the applauses of mankind, is carried over the Alps, and seen at Paris in all its original symmetry. If it be the destiny of this matchless figure to follow the tide of fortune, and to change its residence with the changes of empire, and the casualties of human affairs, who shall decide where it may next be found? If Julius II, when he placed the Apollo in the Vatican, had been told, that, three hundred years afterward, a french warrior would attach it to his car of victory, in entering the city of Paris, would even the pope himself have had faith enough to believe such a prophecy? After this, no conjecture becomes improbable. Who knows, that this celebrated statue may not, some centuries hence, be disco-

vered on the frozen plains of Siberia, or in the burning sands of Egypt?

The subject of the Laocoon is so pathetic, and the execution so admirable, that the group which it presents, is, as the catalogue well observes, a specimen, at once, of composition, art, and feeling. The following is the historical account of this statue:

" Il a été trouvé en 1506, sous le pontificat de Julius II, à Rome sur le mont Esquilin, dans les ruines du palais de Titus, contigu à ses thermes. Pline qui en a parlé avec admiration, l'avait vu dans ce même endroit. C'est à cet ecrivain que nous devons la connoissance des trois habiles sculpteurs Rhodiens qui l'ont exécuté, ils s'appellaient Agésandre, Polydore, et Athenodore. Agésandre etoit probablement le père des deux autres, ils florissaient au premier siècle de l'ere vulgaire. La groupe est composé de cinq blocs si artistement réunis, que Pline l'a cru d'un seul. Le bras droit du père et deux bras des enfans manquent. Sans doute un jour on les exécutera en marbre. Mais provisionnellement on les a suppliés par des bras moulés sur la groupe en plâtre, restauré par *Gerardon*, qui se voit dans la salle de l'école de peinture."

TRANSLATION.

" It was found in 1506, under the pontificate Julius II, at Rome, on the Esquiline mount, in the

ruins of the palace of Titus, near his *thermæ*, or hot baths. Pliny, who speaks of this statue with admiration, had seen it in the same place. It is to this writer we are indebted for the knowledge of the three able sculptors of Rhodes, who executed this masterpiece. Their names were, Agesander, Polydorus, and Athenodorus. It is probable, that the first of these was the father of the other two. They flourished during the first century of the common era. The group consists of five pieces of marble, joined in so workmanlike a manner, that Pliny thought the whole was of one. The right arm of the father, and two of the arms of the children, are wanting. They will, no doubt, be executed hereafter in marble; in the mean time, the deficiency is supplied by arms moulded on the group in plaister of Paris, the work of Gerardon, which is to be seen in the hall of the school of painting."

In taking leave of the gallery of statues, I ought, perhaps, in answer to several inquiries, which have been made me in letters from England, to mention, that the *Hercules Farnese*, and the *Venus de Medici*, are not in the collection. A british officer, lately returned from Egypt by way of Italy, tells me, that both these statues are at present in the island of Sicily. They are in the possession of the king of Naples, who keeps

them locked up in cases, and refuses permission, even to his greatest favourites, to see them.

Adieu.

POSTSCRIPT.

I add, for the sake of gratifying the curiosity of such of your friends as are connoisseurs, and wish to know where their favourite pictures may be found, a list of those of the most celebrated masters, now in the Louvre.

FRENCH SCHOOL.

CHARLES LE BRUN.

No. 9. The Courage of Mutius Scævola.
10. The Death of Cato.
11. Portrait of Charles le Brun, taken in his youth, by himself.
12. St. Stephen stoned.
13. The Magdalen at the Pharisee's.
14. Jesus asleep, or Silence.
15. The Benedicite.
16. The Cross surrounded with Angels.
17. The Defeat of Porus.
18. The Tent of Darius.
19. The Entry of Alexander into Babylon.
20. The Death of Meleager, king of Calydon.
21. The Conquest of Franche-Compté.—(The sketch from which le Brun drew the celebrated picture, in the great gallery at Versailles.)
22. The Nativity.

NICHOLAS POUSSIN.

No. 67. The Martyrdom of St. Erasmus, the Bishop.
68. The Philistines attacked with the Plague.
69. The Rape of the Sabines.
70. The Fall of Manna in the Desert.

No. 71. Time makes Truth triumph.
72. The Last Supper.
73. St. Francis Xavier in India.
74. St. John Baptising in the river Jordan.
75. Rebecca and Eliezer.
76. Diogenes throwing away his Cup.
77. The Judgment of Solomon.
78. The Blind Men of Jericho.
79. Portrait of Poussin, taken by himself.
80. The Adultress.
81. The Death of Sapphira.
82. Winter, or the Deluge.
83. The Death of Eurydice.
84. The Holy Family.
85. The Assumption of the Virgin.

RESTOUT.

No. 88. Alpheus and Arethusa.

LE SUEUR (EUSTACHE.)

No. 98. The Preaching of St. Paul at Ephesus.
99. The Descent from the Cross.
100. The Celebration of Mass by St. Martin.
101. St. Gervais and St. Protais.
102. Clio, the Muse of History.
Euterpe, the Muse of Music.
Thalia, the Muse of Comedy.
103. Calliope, the Muse of Epic Poetry.
104. Urania, the Muse of Astronomy.
105. Terpsichore, the Muse of Dancing.
106. Melpomene, the Muse of Tragedy.
Erato, the Muse of Lyric Poetry.
Polyhymnia, the Muse of Eloquence.

VAN LOO (CARLO.)

No. 115. Æneas and Anchises.
116. The Marriage of the Virgin.

VAN LOO (JOHN BAPTISTE.)

No. 117. Diana and Endymion.

VAN LOO (LOUIS MICHAEL.)

No. 118. The Picture of Carlo van Loo, the historical painter.

DUTCH, FLEMISH, AND GERMAN SCHOOL.

CHAMPAGNE (PHILIP OF.)

No. 212. The Archbishop of Milan, St. Ambrose.
213. The carrying the Bodies of St. Gervais and St. Protais, from the spot where they were found, to the cathedral of Milan, by order of the Archbishop.
214. A dead Christ extended on the Bier.
215. The Supper.
216. The Nuns.
217. Philip of Champagne, painted by himself, in 1668, at the age of 66 years.

CLAISSENS (ANTONY.)

No. 218. The Judgment of Cambyses.
219. Cambyses orders an unjust Judge to be flayed alive, directing his skin to be turned into a cover for the bench of his successor.

DURER (ALBERT.)

No. 249. The Portrait of a Geometrician.
250. The Portrait of a Musician.
251. A Crucifix.

DYCK (ANTONY VAN.)

No. 252. Christ lying dead in the Arms of the Virgin: near him are St. Magdalen and St. John.

253. St. Augustin in a Swoon.

254. Charles the First, king of England.—(A delightful picture.)

255. The Mother of Pity.

256. Francis of Moncade, Marquis d'Aylonne, governor of the Netherlands for Philip the Fourth.—This man was both a warrior and an historian.

257. St. Martin cutting his Cloak, in order to give half of it to a poor Man.—(This is one of the most interesting pictures in the whole collection.)

258. Antony van Dyck.

259. *Comte de Luck*, holding an orange in his hand.

260. Half-length Picture of a Man, with his hand on his breast.

261. The Picture of a Man in Black.

262. The *Ex-voto* and the Virgin.

263. Jesus carrying his Cross.

264. The Portraits of Charles the First, Elector Palatine, and Prince Robert his Brother, both in military dresses.

265. The Portrait of a Man on Foot, holding his daughter, who is on horseback, by the hand.

266. The Portrait of a Lady and her Son.

267. The half-length Portrait of a Man of 37, having a glove on his left hand.

268. Half-length Portrait of a young Woman, with a fan of feathers in her hand.

269. John Richardot (president of the privy council of the Netherlands), one of the negotiators sent by the king of Spain to Vervins—died in 1609.

270. Portrait, in the shape of a bust, of a Man in a black Cloak.

No. 271. Venus soliciting from Vulcan Arms for Æneas.
272. The taking down from the Cross, a sketch.

DYCK (PHILIP VAN) CALLED THE LITTLE VAN DYCK, PUPIL OF ARNOLD BOONEN.

No. 270. B. Sarah presenting Agar to Abraham.
271. B. Agar repudiated by Abraham, at the instigation of Sarah.
272. B. Judith giving to her Maid the Head of Holophernes.
273. A Woman at her Toilet.
274. A young Woman playing on the Guitar.

GYZEN (PETER.)

No. 295. A Village Holiday.—(A very laughable picture.)

HOLBEIN (HANS OR JOHN) PUPIL OF JOHN HOLBEIN, HIS FATHER.

No. 313. The Portrait of a Man, with a black Cat.
314. Thomas Moore (lord chancellor of England) beheaded by order of Henry VIII.
315. The Portrait of a young Man carrying a Hawk.
316. The Sacrifice of Abraham.
317. A young Woman in a Necklace of Pearls, and a red Jacket.
318. Erasmus.
319. A young Woman with a yellow Veil.
320. Robert Cheeseman, at the age of 48, with a Hawk.
321. Master Nicholas Kratzer, astronomer of Henry VIII of England.
322. The Archbishop of Canterbury, painted in 1528, at the age of 70.
323. Ann of Cleves, wife of Henry VIII of England.—(Henry the eighth married her on seeing this picture, but repudiated her six months after,

finding that her beauty by no means equalled that which had been given her by the painter.)

No. 324. The Portrait, in miniature, of Erasmus.

PAUL POTTER.

No. 446. Landscape, with Cattle.—(This is the picture in which I particularly admired the exact and wonderful imitation of Nature.)

447. A Meadow.

448. A Meadow watered by a River, in which animals are drinking and men bathing.—(This is a charming picture.)

449. Oxen and Pigs in a Pasture, near a cottage.

450. Two Horses at a Trough, near the door of a public house. A man brings them water.

451. A Field.—In the front, three cows are standing under an oak; and, on the left, an ox with white and black spots.

REMBRANDT (VAN RYN PAUL.)

No. 455. The Head of a Man, with a hat ornamented with black feathers.

456. Portrait of Rembrandt in his youth, taken by himself.

457. The Head of a Woman, dressed in long ear-rings, and a fur cloak.

458. The good Samaritan.

459. The Head of an old Man with a long beard, who is also bald.

460. A Jewish Bride.

461. The Head of a young Man with a black cap, and a golden chain round his neck.

462. The meditating Philosopher.

463. The contemplating Philosopher.

464. Small Head of a Man, dressed in a straw bonnet.

No. 465. The Family of a Joiner.

466. Tobias and Family prostrate before the angel Raphael, who disappears from their sight, after making himself known.

467. Susannah at the Bath.

468. The Pilgrims of Emaus, and the breaking of Bread.

469. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple.

470. St. Matthew, the Evangelist.

471. The Portrait of Rembrandt, in a more advanced period of life than that of 456.

472. Venus and Cupid.

473. An old Man at his Meditations.

RUBENS (PETER PAUL.)

No. 479. The Education of Mary of Medici.

480. The Lying in of Mary of Medici.

His celebrated picture of the Assumption has lately been put up in the *Musée*.

481. The Happiness of Peace.

508. Adriana de Perès, wife of Nicholas Rockox, married in 1589, died in 1619.

509. The Crucifixion of St. Peter.

510. Christ on the Cross, between the two Thieves, at the moment when the centurion wounds him in the side.

511. The Last Supper.

512. The Adoration of the Kings, larger than life.

513. St. Roch interceding for the Persons afflicted with the Plague.

514. St. Roch fed by his Dog.

N. B. I particularly recommend these last six pictures to your attention. They are more than commonly beautiful.

515. St. Roch cured of the Plague by an Angel.

516. Christ dead in the Arms of his Father.

No. 517. The Adoration of the Wise Men.—(An admirable picture.)

518. The Beheading of St. John the Baptist.

519. St. John the Evangelist thrown into a Copper of boiling Oil.

520. The Portrait of a Woman, dressed in a hat, and holding a bunch of roses in her hand.

521. Another Portrait of a Woman in black, her head uncovered, and her hands crossed.

522. The Nativity of our Saviour, a sketch.

523. The Resurrection of Christ, a sketch.

524. Lot and his Family leaving Sodom, led by an Angel.

525. The Virgin and the Infant Jesus, surrounded with Innocents. This is called the Virgin and the Angels.

526. The Kernesse, or Village Holiday.—(A very curious picture.)

527. The Descent from the Cross.

528. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes.

529. The Apostles finding in the Mouth of a Fish, the Piece of Money necessary for the Payment of the Tribute.

530. The Angel, making the Young Tobias angle for the Fish, the gall of which was to restore his Father's sight.

531. The Portrait of a Princess, who appears to be Elizabeth of Bourbon, Daughter of Henry the IV, and Wife of Philip, King of Spain.

532. The Triumph of Pomona.

533. Venus and Adonis.

534. A View of Malines.

535. A View of Cadiz.

TENIERS (THE YOUNGER DAVID.)

No. 575. The Smoker.
576. The Grinder.
577. Country people dancing to the sound of the Bagpipe.
578. The Works of Charity.
579. The Village Wedding.
580. The Preparations for a Repast.
581. Peter's Denial of our Saviour.
582. A Landscape.
583. The inside of an Ale-house, with Persons playing at Cards.
584. The Prodigal Son at Table, with his Mistresses.—(In this picture Teniers is supposed to have drawn himself and his Family.)
585. Hern-shooting.
586. The Alchymist in his Laboratory.
587. An old Man's Head in a Fur Dress and Bonnet.
588. The inside of an Ale-house.

TENIERS (THE ELDER DAVID.)

No. 589. A Man playing on a Bagpipe.

ITALIAN SCHOOL.

GIO BENEDETTO CASTIGLIONE (CALLED AT GENOA, IL GRECHETTO, AND IN FRANCE, THE BENDETTE.)

No. 689. The Nativity.
690. The Money-sellers driven from the Temple.
691. Melchisedec, King of Salem, offering Bread and Wine to Abraham.
692. A Woman carrying a Vase on her head, an old Man, and an African with a Turban on his head holding a copper plate.

No. 693. In the middle of a Court a Woman carrying a Copper Vessel, and an Ass loaded with Kitchen Furniture.

694. Jacob leaves Mesopotamia, in order to see his Father in Canaan.

695. Bacchanalians and Satyrs resting, and playing on different Instruments.

ALBANI (FRANCESCO.)

No. 660. The Birth of the Virgin.

661. Mystic Vision of the Cross.

662. Diana and Acteon.

663. The Holy Family.

664. The Rest in Egypt.

665. The Rest in Egypt.

666. St. Francis praying before a Crucifix.

667. God the Father in his Glory.

668. Adam and Eve.

669. The Annunciation of the Virgin.

670. The Annunciation of the Virgin.

671. Our Saviour appearing to Mary Magdalen.

672. The Baptism of Jesus in the Waters of Jordan.

673. The preaching of St. John in the Desert.

674. Apollo at the House of Admetus, King of Thessaly.

675. The Triumph of Cybele.

676. Fire.

677. Air.

678. Water.

679. Earth.

680.
681.
682.
683. } The Loves and Graces at the Toilet of Venus.

No. 684. Apollo and Daphne.
685. Salmacis and Hermaphroditus.

THE CARRACCI.

The four Elements by the three Carracci, that is to say,
No. 703. Earth, by Lodovico Carracci.
704. Water, by Lodovico Carracci.
705. Fire, by Agostino Carracci.
706. Air, by Annibale Carracci.

CARRACCI (AGOSTINO.)

No. 707. The Assumption of the Virgin.
708. St. Cæcilia and St. Marguerite.
709. The Communion of St. Jerom.
710. Hercules in his Cradle, strangling the Serpents.

CARRACCI (LODOVICO.)

No. 711. The Virgin, St. Francis, and St. Joseph.
712. St. Hyacinth, to whom the Virgin appears.
713. The occupation of St. Matthew.
714. St. John baptizing Christ.
715. The Annunciation of the Virgin.
716. The Nativity of Jesus Christ.
717. The Virgin and the Infant Jesus.

CARRACCI (ANTONIO, NATURAL SON OF AGOSTINO CARRACCI.)

No. 718. The Deluge.

CARRACCI (ANNIBALE.)

No. 719. The Mother of Pity.
720. St. Luke, St. Catharine, and the Virgin.
721. Christ lying dead on the Knees of the Virgin.
722. The Birth of the Virgin.
723. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

No. 724. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ.
725. Jesus asleep. This picture is commonly called, the Silence of Carracci.
726. Fishing.
727. Hunting.
728. The Nativity of Jesus Christ.
729. The Nativity of Jesus Christ.
730. Christ laid in his Tomb.
731. The Portrait of a learned Man.
732. The Annunciation of the Virgin.
733. Diana and Calisto.
734. The Martyrdom of St. Stephen.
735. The Martyrdom of St. Stephen.
736. A Concert on the Water.
737. The preaching of St. John in the Desert.
738. The Annunciation of the Virgin.
739. The Assumption of the Virgin.
740. A Hermit meditating.
741. The Sacrifice of Abraham. A Landscape.
742. The Death of Absalom. A Landscape.

CARAVAGGIO (MICHAEL ANGELO AMERIGI, CALLED THE CARAVAGGE.)

No. 743. The Death of the Virgin.
744. Christ carried to the Grave.
745. Adolphus and Vignacourt.
746. A young Gipsy telling a young Man's Fortune.
747. St. John the Baptist.
748. Wandering Musicians singing at the close of Evening, and at the Corner of the Street, an Anthem to the Virgin.

N.B. It is doubtful whether this was the work of Caravaggio, or of one of his pupils.

CAVEDONE (JAMES.)

No. 749. St. Eloi and St. Petronius.
750. St. Cæcilia singing the praises of the Lord.

CORREGIO (ANTONY ALLEGRI, CALLED THE CORREGE.)

No. 753. The Virgin, the Infant Jesus, the Magdalen, and St. Jerom.
754. The Rest in Egypt.
755. Antiope asleep.
756. The Marriage of St. Catharine.
757. The taking down from the Cross.
758. The Martyrdom of St. Placidus and St. Flavia.
759. The Infant St. John.
760. A Head of Christ crowned with Thorns.

DOMENICHINO (DOMENICO ZAMPIEN, CALLED IN FRANCE THE DOMENIQUEZ).

No. 763. The Communion of St. Jerom.—(N. B. This admirable picture appears to me the best in the collection.
764. The Rosary protected by the Virgin.
765. The Martyrdom of St. Agnes.
766. David playing on the Harp.
767. Renaud and Armide.
768. Æneas saving his Father Anchises from the Ruins of Troy.
769. St. Cæcilia.
770. The Concert.
771. The Virgin and St. Antony of Padua.
772. The Virgin taking Water from a River with a Shell.
773. Timoclea before Alexander.
774. A Landscape.
775. A Landscape.

No. 776. A Landscape.
777. God cursing Adam and Eve.
778. The Ecstacy of St. Paul.
779. The Triumph of Love.

FERRARI (GANDERTIO.)

No. 784. St. Paul the Apostle.
785. The Nativity of Jesus Christ.

GUIDO (RENI, CALLED IN FRANCE THE GUIDE.)

No. 797. The Crucifixion of St. Peter.
798. Christ giving the Keys to St. Peter.
799. St. Jerom, St. Thomas, and the Virgin.
800. Fortune.
801. David holding the Head of the Giant Goliath.
802. The Virgin, the Infant Jesus, and St. John kissing his Feet.
803. The Virgin holding the Infant Jesus asleep on her Knees.
804. The Union of Design and Colouring.
805. St. John the Baptist in the Desert.
806. The Magdalen.
807. The Magdalen.
808. St. Sebastian.
809. The Samaritan Woman.
810. Christ in the Garden of Olives.
811. Christ on the Cross, and the Magdalen.
812. A Head of Christ crowned with Thorns.
813. Hercules killing the Hydra.
814. The Battle of Hercules and Achelöus.
815. The taking away of Dejanira by Nessus.
816. Hercules on the Funeral Pile.
817. The Mother of Pity, with the Saints who protected the City of Bologna.
818. St. Roch in his Prison.

No 819. The Massacre of the Innocents.
820. The Angelic Salutation.
821. The Purification of the Virgin.
822. The Sleep of the Infant Jesus.
823. The eternal Father.
824. St. John in the Wilderness.
825. The Rest in Egypt.
826. St. John.
827. The carrying away of Helen.

GUERCINO (GIO FRANCESCO BARBIERI, CALLED THE GUERCHIN.)

829. The Picture of Guerchini, painted by himself.
830. The Magician Circe.
831. Jesus Christ giving the Keys to St. Peter.
832. The Martyrdom of St. Peter the Apostle.
833. The Resurrection of Lazarus.
834. The Infant Jesus, holding the Hand of his Mother, gives his benediction.
835. The Incredulity of St. Thomas.
836. The Vision of St. Jerom.
837. Amnon and Thamar.
838. St. Theresa and Jesus Christ.
839. The Circumcision of Christ.
840. The beheading of St. John and St. Paul, under the Reign of the Emperor Julian, called the Apostate.
841. The Vision of St. Bruno.
842. The Saints Protectors of the Town of Modena.
843. The Virgin appearing to St. Jerom.
844. St. Peter at his Prayers.
845. St. Paul holding the Sword with which he is about to be put to Death.
846. St. Francis and St. Benoit.
847. St. William and St. Felix.
848. The Marriage of St. Catherine.

No. 849. Herod's Daughter receiving the Head of St. John the Baptist.

850. Christ appearing to the Virgin.

851. Conclusion of the Battle between the Romans and Sabines.

LANFRANCO (GIOVANNI LANFRANCO, CALLED THE LANFRANC.)

No. 854. Agar in the Desert.

855. The parting of St. Peter and St. Paul.

856. St. Bartholomew the Apostle.

857. St. Peter imploring the Pardon of his Master.

857. B. St. Peter deploring his Faults.

858. The crowning of the Virgin.

THE FOLLOWING ARE FROM THE ROMAN, FLORENTINE, AND VENETIAN SCHOOLS.

ALEXANDER VERONESE.

No. 910. The Adultress.

LEONARDO DA VINCI.

No. 921. The holy family accompanied by St. Michael, St. Elizabeth, and St. John holding a Sheep.

922. The Virgin holding the Infant Jesus.

923. The Picture of Madame Lise.

924. The Picture of a Woman in black.

PAUL VERONESE.

No. 927. The Marriage of St. Catherine.

RAPHAEL.

No. 931. The Infant Jesus caressing St. John.

932. St. Michael subduing the Devil.

No. 933. St. Michael combating Monsters. An allegorical painting.

934. St. George.

935. The Virgin, St. John, and the Infant Jesus asleep. (Commonly called the Silence of the Virgin.)

936. The Vision of Ezekiel.

937. A young Man reflecting.

938. A young Man about fifteen or sixteen Years old.

To which pictures of Raphael has lately been added his celebrated one of the Holy Family.

TITIAN (TIZIANO VECELLI.)

No. 940. The crowning with Thorns.

941. Christ carried to the Tomb.

942. Portrait of a Man in black.

943. Portrait of a Man in black.

LETTER III.

The *fête* of the 18th of brumaire in honour of the preliminaries, and of the anniversary of the consular government.—Apathy of the people.—Fireworks.—Accident which happened to an english gentleman.—*Postscript.* The death of the gentleman last named.

Paris, november the 10th, 1801 (19 brumaire.)

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING in my last letter attempted to describe the objects which particularly attracted my notice on my first arrival, I shall in this endeavour to satisfy the curiosity which you will naturally feel, relative to the splendid *fête* celebrated yesterday in honour of the peace with England, and of the anniversary of the consular government.

The rejoicings may be said to have begun on the preceding evening; as the cannon were fired, and the theatres thrown open to the public, with the single exception of the italian opera, where was also represented a musical piece, the words of which were in honour of the occasion. I wished very much to have been present at one of the performances given gratis to the people; but I was dissuaded from going there, by the advice of some french friends, who assured me, that the attempt would be attended with considerable

danger. I therefore contented myself with visiting the only *spectacle** where money was received.

* *Spectacle.*—This is so important a word, and of such general use in french conversation, that I cannot too soon introduce it to the notice of my english readers. It means, first, all the theatres, puppet-shows, pantomimes, horse exercises, and other motley amusements of this gay capital.

It is also perpetually in the mouths both of gentlemen and ladies. If you ask one of the former, whether he were pleased with the opera, he replies, " Oui, enchanté; le spectacle étoit magnifique." (Yes, delighted; the spectacle was magnificent.) And if you put a similar question about a ball to one of the latter, you receive a similar answer.

If you speak with enthusiasm of the picture gallery, a parisian coldly observes, " C'est bien vrai, c'est un très beau spectacle." (Yes, it is a very fine spectacle, or sight.)

If a stranger enquire, whether the monthly parade of Bonaparte's troops deserve its celebrity, he is told, " Oui, c'est un très beau spectacle." (Yes, it is a fine spectacle.)

It is also the favourite theme of conversation; and a parisian, compelled to talk with a foreigner, is sure to begin with the following words: " Allez vous souvent, monsieur, au spectacle? Ne sont ils pas bien beaux nos spectacles?" (Do you often go to the *spectacles?* Are not our *spectacles* very fine?)

A similar observation forms likewise the hospitable kind of consolation which an englishman sometimes receives, if he complain, that he has not seen much of french society. " Mais cependant, vous ne pouvez pas manquer d' amusement; à Paris les spectacles sont si beaux." (You cannot want amusement, however; the spectacles at Paris are so fine.)

The company of italian actors usually occupies the *Théâtre Favart*, but at present performs in a very beautiful little play-house belonging to " la Société olympique," situate in the street which was formerly known as " la rue de Chante Reine;" but which, in honour of Bonaparte, (who resided there while a private man) is now called " la rue de la Victoire."

The entrance to this theatre is strikingly elegant and novel, consisting of a circular piazza, in the middle of which is a grass plot. The building is well proportioned; and the chande-

In consequence of the general application of this word in France to every thing relating to the stage, a parisian, on his arrival in London, wishing to go to the play, supposed that he had only to look for the word spectacle in a french and english dictionary; and, having found that the literal translation gave him the same word, with perfect confidence directed his hackney coachman to *drive to the spectacle*. The fellow, supposing that he wanted to purchase a pair of spectacles, conducted him to the celebrated shop at Charing-cross. The frenchman flew into a passion, and by his gestures conveyed, that this was not the place where he desired to go. The coachman, imagining that this was not the optician's, to which he wished to be taken, carried him to several others in different parts of the town. After a long round, during which the favourite oaths of the two countries were mutually exchanged between *monsieur* and his *charioteer*, the former was compelled to pass his evening in the hackney coach instead of the play-house, and thus learnt the difference between french *spectacles* and english *spectacles*.

lier, by which it is brilliantly lighted, extremely beautiful. The music seemed good; but the female performers relied entirely on the charms of their voice; for I never remember to have seen, on any other stage, such an assemblage of ugly women as this presented. The audience consisted of the best company at Paris; and I had the pleasure of seeing there madame Bonaparte, who sat in the stage box, accompanied by mademoiselle Beauharnois, her daughter, and by madame le Clerc, the consul's sister. Bonaparte was also said to be present, but being in a *loge grillé*, could not be perceived.

Madame, as far as I can judge from the distance at which I saw her, has a mild, amiable countenance, which is universally allowed to be the just picture of her disposition. Her person is elegant, and her appearance altogether much like that of an english woman of fashion.

Mademoiselle Beauharnois* is a fair girl of sixteen or seventeen, and, without being remarkably beautiful, is extremely interesting. Her manners are modest; and her dress simple, and in good taste. Madame le Clerc† is a very

* Mademoiselle Beauharnois is since married to Louis Bonaparte, one of the brothers of the first consul; to whom she has become, therefore, both daughter and sister.

† Married to General le Clerc, who commanded the expedition to St. Domingo, since so successfully t erminated

pretty little woman, and much admired at Paris.

Excuse this digression, into which I was led by naming the preparatory rejoicings of the preceding evening. I proceed to the *fête* itself. The 18th of brumaire, that long expected day, began in clouds and rain. The Parisians were *au désespoir*. Every body predicted, that the vast preparations, which had been made for this jubilee, would be thrown away; that the illuminations would fail; in short, that the whole would be an "*affaire manquée**".

Those who ventured into the streets, notwithstanding the torrents of rain, heard, on every

She accompanied him to that island, and incurred all the dangers of climate and of war. She did so in obedience to Bonaparte's particular orders; with whom it is an undeviating principle, that a wife should always follow the steps and fortunes of her husband.

* As we should say in english, "a lost thing." The french expression is more commonly used, and is infinitely stronger in its meaning. It is adopted on all occasions of misfortune; such as, to deplore the death of a friend, or the loss of a "spectacle." A general was lately killed in a duel. A fair parisian of high fashion, to whom he was much attached, on hearing of the accident, exclaimed, with an accent of deep despair, "Que je suis à plaindre! il devoit m'avoir amenée au bal de l'opéra demain. Voilà une affaire bien manquée." (How am I to be pitied! he was to have taken me to the ball at the opera to morrow. Here is a lost thing, or a party completely deranged.)

side, "*quel mauvais temps! quel malheur! vraiment c'est terrible—c'est affreux. La fête auroit été si belle, si ce diable de pluie n'avoit pas tombé**."

The morning passed away without the faintest hopes of better weather, and in mutual condolences on the loss of the *beau spectacle*, which had been promised for this day. The rejoicings were to begin at four o'clock. About three the weather suddenly changed, the clouds dispersed, the sky became serene. It happened that this took place precisely at the moment, when the first consul appeared at the window of the palace, and every body agreed, that the favourable change was solely produced *par la bonne fortune de Bonaparte* †.

Indeed, it is not without some reason that this prejudice is entertained by the public, and that Bonaparte has, on more occasions than one, appealed to his good fortune. Great and transcendent as are the merits of that extraordinary man, they are not more remarkable than the singular concatenation of fortunate circumstances, which have uniformly attended his progress through life. Possessed of the former, unaccompanied by the latter, he would have pro-

* What bad weather! what a misfortune! really it is terrible! it is shocking! The *fête* would have been so fine, if this devilish rain had not fallen!

† By the good fortune of Bonaparte.

bably become a distinguished character, but he never could have reached that summit of grandeur, where he is at present so securely seated.

I return to my subject. The signal for the commencement of the *fête* was the departure of a balloon, in which monsieur and madame Garnerin ascended, at half past four o'clock, through a clear sky, which no longer bore any marks of the tempestuous weather of the morning. After the balloon had attained a certain height, a parachute was sent down, and the live animal which it contained reached the ground in safety. I was fortunate enough to dine this day with a family* who reside in what was first called "la Garde-meuble," then "la place de Louis XV," for some time the seat of so many legal murders, under the appellation of "de la Re-

* At the house of the respectable M. de la T——, whose niece is the lady of the celebrated P——t, some time president of the convention, and afterwards banished, with many other worthy men, at the revolution of the 18th of Fructidor. M. P——t is a distinguished writer; and, as a politician, was much esteemed for the moderation of his principles, and the integrity of his conduct. Madame P——t is a womanof very superiour talents and great acquirements. She is likewise justly admired for the humanity which has induced her to devote her hours to that excellent institution, *la Société Maternelle*, of which she is the president. The object of this society is, to afford deserted orphans that comfort, of which they have been deprived by the death or the fault of their parents.

volution," and now styled, in honour of the present government, "*de la Concorde.*" As the principal rejoicings were to take place in this spot, I could not have been better situate. We dined in a back room; and during the short time which we passed at table (for a french dinner seldom exceeds an hour), the lamps had been lighted. Never shall I forget the splendid sight, which appeared to have been almost produced by magic, and which burst on us in returning to the salon (or *drawing room*), the windows of which command an extensive view of the *place de la Concorde*, of the bridge of Louis XVI, of the palace or hospital of *les Invalides*, of the Thuilleries, of the palace of the *Corps Legislatif*, formerly called "*de Bourbon*," of the river, and of several buildings in the *Fauxbourg St. Germain.* All these striking objects were now one blaze of light. My eyes were so dazzled with the scene which presented itself, that it was some time before I could take a distinct view of each particular beauty. The public edifices I have named, all of which are of the finest architecture, covered with innumerable lamps, arranged with the greatest taste, and which being of different heights, seemed to rise the one above the other; and the majestic domes splendidly illuminated, and extending the blaze of light as far as the eye could reach, formed altogether a *coup d'œil*, which may be conceived, but which cannot be

described. I had scarcely recovered from the surprise and admiration, which this sight produced, when the pantomime, intended to represent the horrors of war, and the happiness of peace, began under the colonade, where it was my good fortune to be seated.

I must confess, that this farce appeared to me ridiculous, and equally unworthy the great nation which gave the *fête*, and the important event which it was intended to celebrate. Sham combats, falling towers, wounded heroes, devils with torches, allegorical emblems of Discord, &c. followed by cornucopias, dancing peasants, cars of triumph, and lastly, by an illuminated temple of peace, which rose on the ruins of that of war, formed the principal entertainment. I think you will agree with me, that such a *spectacle* was better calculated for the stage of Sadler's Wells in London, or the *Ambigu-comique* at Paris, than for the principal object of a great and national festival. Simple and plain as is this reflection, it did not seem to strike any of the french spectators, and the wisest of them looked on without disgust, and almost with admiration, on that which, instead of commemorating the most important event which Europe has seen for many years, appeared to the eye of reason only suited to entertain the dotage of age, or the simplicity of infancy.

If the pantomime were not very deserving of praise, it forms a single exception; and I can assure you, with great truth, that every other part of the *fête* was truly magnificent. As no carriage was allowed to roll that evening (a laudable precaution, taken on all such occasions at Paris), and as the fireworks were to take place on the river, at some distance from the house where I dined, it was necessary to pass on foot, through the vast crowd which filled *la place de la Concorde*, the walks of the Thuilleries, the bridges, the streets, &c. Yet such was the order that was preserved, and such the tranquillity of the people, that, accompanied by my wife and one gentleman, I made my way, I suppose, through nearly a million of people, without the least accident, and with certainly not more crowding than is daily experienced at a private fashionable ball in London. What astonished me most, indeed, the whole day, was the dead calm which prevailed among the spectators. They looked on, walked about, and seemed entertained with the shows which were exhibited; yet no cries of triumph, no shouts of joy, expressed the public satisfaction. The apathy which prevails in this country on all public events, and which has succeeded to the fever of popular violence, is strikingly apparent on all occasions, but on none more than this.

During my walk, I passed through the garden of the Thuilleries. The alleys were brilliantly decorated with rows of lamps, suspended on frames constructed for the purpose; and the palace was itself, if possible, still more resplendent. The whole had the appearance of an enchanted castle. From a house on the *quai Voltaire*, I saw the fireworks to great advantage; and they appeared to me, accustomed only to such as are exhibited in England, extremely beautiful. What pleased me most in the display, was a contrivance, by which the fire seemed to rise from the water; an ingenious and elegant idea, by which the inventor probably meant to represent allegorically, by the union of opposing elements, the reconciliation of two nations, always the rivals, and so long the enemies, of each other. There was a temple of commerce on the river, and little boats, with pendants of different nations. All this I consider as forming a second act to the pantomime exhibited on the *place de la Concorde*, and which I have already ventured to condemn. Both appeared, to an english eye, insignificant, if not ridiculous.

The fireworks appeared to me as perfect as possible; but there was some discontent expressed by the persons near me, that what is called a *bouquet*, with which they were to have concluded, was not displayed. This disappointment was attributed by some to a want of skill in

the manager, and by others to an order of government, arising from a fear of danger to the adjoining buildings.

I cannot pretend to determine this *important* question; but I must be permitted to say, that if the parisians were not satisfied with this day's amusement, they must be very unreasonable indeed in their pursuit of *spectacles*.

I returned home about eleven at night, much delighted with what I had seen; and though Mrs. —— and myself were again obliged to pass through this mighty crowd, we neither of us experienced the slightest hurt, or the least incivility.

I was in hopes to have been able to add, that the day passed over without the most trifling accident; but I have, unfortunately, just received the melancholy news, that Mr. ——, an english gentleman, fell from a scaffolding, where he had placed himself to see the fireworks, and is so dreadfully wounded, as to render the hopes of his recovery highly improbable.

I understand, that the accident took place very near the Thuilleries, and that the first consul, with laudable humanity, sent every proper assistance to our unfortunate countryman, who is now attended by the physician and surgeon particularly attached to the family of Bonaparte. Most ardently do I hope, that their skill and care may

be attended with success; but I am told, this is more than they expect themselves.

Adieu, my dear friend. I am sorry to send you so imperfect an account of one of the finest sights, perhaps, ever exhibited in Europe; but I do not excel in description at any time, and what I have attempted on this occasion, would baffle the ablest pen.

I am, &c.

POSTSCRIPT.

The unfortunate Mr. ——, mentioned in this letter, languished three weeks in agony, and at last expired, in the arms of a young and beautiful wife, who had accompanied him in this ill-fated journey, (the sole object of which was the sight of a festival, which had to him so tragical a conclusion), who attended him, with exemplary patience and unceasing care, during his illness, and who, after receiving his last breath, herself conveyed his remains to his native country. To add to the calamity of this unfortunate and amiable woman, she had not a friend, or even an acquaintance, of either sex, at Paris; and in the discharge of the painful and pious offices I have mentioned, her only assistant was Mr. Perrigaux, her banker, who, I am told, afforded her every consolation in his power.—Though I did not know this lady, her story made a deep impression on my mind, and for some days I could not divest myself of the melancholy it created.

LETTER IV.

State of society at Paris.—The three sets, *l'ancienne noblesse*, the governmental class, and *les parvenus ou nouveaux riches*. —Description of a house belonging to one of the latter.

Paris, november the 19th, 1801 (28th brumaire.)

MY DEAR SIR,

MY two last letters were filled with details of pictures, statues, pantomimes, and *fêtes*. In this, I shall only speak to you of men and manners.

Visiting Paris after a revolution which has produced such extraordinary alterations in the laws, customs, and opinions of the people, I expected to find an equal change in the state of society. A great change has certainly taken place, but the change is of a different nature from what I foresaw. An english lady, of much wit, said to me the other day, "When I arrived at Paris, I expected to meet with philosophers in every society, and to hear nothing discussed but subjects of the highest import. Alas! how have I been disappointed!" As to me, I entertained no such idea; but I certainly supposed that the political events in which every person had been forced, in one way or other, to act a part, would have accustomed the minds of men to such a variance of opinion, that all subjects

would be canvassed with liberality, and that, whatever might be the sentiments of an individual, he would be heard with tolerance.

The lady I have mentioned was not more mistaken than I have been. There is no country under the sun, where less freedom is allowed in conversation. I do not mean to say, that the government checks or interferes with what passes in private society; on the contrary, I have more than once heard in company remarks made at the expense of persons in power, which even in England would be thought inflammatory: but what I complain of is, that in every circle there is a certain creed, or string of opinions, from which, if one of the company were to venture to dissent, he would be considered as "*de mauvaise compagnie**." These opinions are not confined to the affairs of France, but extend themselves to those of England; and in the societies where I have been thrown, I have been more than once suspected of jacobinism, for not joining in a philippic against Mr. Fox, or in an eulogy on lord Grenville.

As to society, it appears to me, that there are three great divisions, or principal classes, at

* "De mauvaise compagnie"—"of bad company, unfit for good company." The terms, "bonne compagnie," and *mauvaise* "compagnie," are for ever in the mouths of *coquettes* and *petits-maîtres*. It is difficult to define what, I believe, is meant to be indefinable.

Paris. The first, in point of antiquity, and perhaps still of public opinion (for, notwithstanding all the laws to the contrary, family prejudices are as strong as ever in France), is that of *l'ancienne noblesse**, who separate themselves almost entirely from the other classes, and live together at the houses of such of their body, as are still rich enough to give assemblies. The second, which I shall call the governmental set, consists of the ministers, of the counsellors of state, of the ambassadors, of the senators, legislators, tribunes, &c. in short, of all the constituted authorities. The third class is what the pride of the first denominates " les parvenus ou nouveaux riches;" consisting of the wealthiest individuals now in France; of persons, who, taking advantage of the circumstances which have occurred, have enriched themselves during the general wreck of

* *L'ancienne noblesse*, literally translated, " the ancient nobility." I use the expression in french, because the word " nobility," in our language, expresses a very different thing.—The nobility of England are a small, respectable, and wealthy body, exercising a great and important part of the constitution, and possessed of powers highly important to the state. The french " *noblesse*" consisted of sixty or seventy thousand families, every individual of which would have thought himself disgraced by engaging in any branch of trade, or useful industry. Enjoying many privileges personally advantageous, but discharging no public functions, as nobles, at all connected with the government.

private fortunes and public credit. Army contracts, national estates, and speculations in the funds, have afforded the means, by which many of these individuals have accumulated overgrown fortunes; but several respectable merchants, bankers, and other commercial men, are unjustly confounded with these, and, under the general name of "fournisseurs*," held up to public contempt.

The first class are still affluent, when spoken of as a body, though few of them have individually large incomes. A distinguished person, connected with the government, and to whom the most important acts of state have been specially entrusted, assures me, that the old proprietors still hold two thirds of the landed estates of France; though, in consequence of the heavy taxes† laid on them during the revolution, by the loss of their woods, of their feudal rights, and of public offices hereditary in their families, (not to mention the present law of descent, by which all children inherit equally), their incomes,

* "Contractors."

† Every landholder in France, in consequence of a law passed in one of the most violent moments of the revolution, and which is still continued, pays one fourth of his real revenue to the state; and as, in particular parts of the country, the rate has been unfairly made, it happens, in some cases, that even a half is paid, instead of a fourth. The latter is the *minimum* of the present taxation.

though in different degrees, are, in every case, greatly diminished.

Some of the old *noblesse*, notwithstanding their misfortunes, still live with considerable splendour, and have houses "*bien montées*," in which they give balls and parties. The most distinguished of these are madame la —— de ——, and madame ——, who have each an assembly once in every week. A *ci-devant comtesse*, belonging to the society, requested the permission of introducing to these houses an english lady, of whom it will be sufficient to say, that though not of exalted rank, she was unexceptionable in every respect, in birth, in character, in fortune, in person, and in situation of life. I think you will be as much surprised, and as much irritated, as I was, when I add, that this *mighty* favour was, in both instances, refused. The reason assigned for this strange want of hospitality, has induced me to mention the fact. The lady in question, having been accustomed to the highest circles in her own country, and discovering, for the first time, in this land of "liberty and equality," the humble distance at which the wife of a commoner ought to regard the chaste and learned festivals of aristocracy, could not help expressing her surprise, if not her anger, to the french friend, who had made the application. "Je suis bien fachée*," replied madame la

* I am very sorry, but to tell you the truth.

comtesse; "*mais pour vous dire la vérité*, the *emigrés* were treated with so little kindness in London, I mean, by the gentlemen and ladies there (for there is no complaint against your government), that it is impossible to persuade their relations to receive the english *chez eux**—*vraiment je suis au désespoir.*"

I am unwilling to think, that such is the general language of the body of emigrants. I know, that there are amongst them men of nice honour, of noble sentiments, and of dignified demeanour; and I have heard some speak, as they ought, of the hospitality they experienced in England: but if there be any who attempt to separate the british government from the inhabitants of the country, I must beg leave to remind them, that it was the english people, from whose pockets that money was drawn, by which, in their misfortunes, they were supported; and that, happily for us, our government is so constructed, that unless the popular voice had sanctioned the laudable humanity of government, not even Mr. Pitt could have afforded them that assistance, which, in every instance, they received from England. As to their reception by individuals in Great Britain, I must be permitted to observe, that such of the emigrants as dignified the poverty (into which they were cruelly thrown)

* At their house—I am really quite distressed.

by the propriety of their conduct, found generally, if not universally, that respect, to which their dreadful reverse of fortune, and their honourable industry, equally entitled them. Those who sought in beggary, in gambling, or in importunate solicitations, a dishonest and precarious existence, ought not to complain of an exclusion from society, which was alone produced by the impropriety of their own conduct. I hope the complaints against english hospitality come from the latter class; if so, the sensible and liberal french will know how to appreciate their evidence. If from the former—— but I will not put an hypothesis, which would appear to doubt the gratitude of men, whose former lives entitle them to esteem.

Begging your pardon for this digression, into which I was involuntarily led, I return to the societies of Paris.

The second class, which I call the governmental, is the most polite to strangers. The second consul has a splendid party every week; and each of the ministers has a day, to which all foreigners may be taken by their respective ministers, after they have been presented at the Thuilleries.

Le Brun, the third consul, frequently gives dinners; and english parties, who have been invited, assure me, that they are particularly pleasant. He is a man of great literary acquire-

ments, and the conversation at his table generally takes a superiour turn.

The ministerial assemblies are crowded; but the houses are large, the attendance good, and the uniforms of the constituted authorities, and the full dress of the ambassadors, give, altogether, a splendour to these meetings, which no others at Paris possess.

The third class—I mean, that of "*the parvenus**"—if not the most elegant, or the most esteemed, is, at least, the most luxurious. Nothing can exceed the splendour of the persons of this description. The furniture of their houses, the dress of their wives, their table, their plate, their villas, in short, all the "*agrémens*" of life, are in the highest style of oriental magnificence.

To give you some idea of their manner of living, I will describe to you the house of madame ——, which I yesterday obtained the permission of seeing, in her absence.

The house is situate in a street leading from the Boulevard, and is approached by a fine court, of considerable length. The back of the house looks on a very pretty garden, arranged *à l'angloise*. It was formerly the residence of a minister of state.

The drawing room, and *salle à manger*†, were not yet finished. The furniture prepared for

* "New Comers," upstarts. † Eating room.

them was rich. I did not think it particularly beautiful; but the bed room, and bathing cabinet, exceeded in luxury every thing which I ever beheld, or even ventured to imagine. The canopy of the bed was of the finest muslin, the covering of pink satin, the frame of beautiful mahogany, supported by figures in gold of antique shapes. The steps, which led to this delicious couch, were covered with red velvet, ornamented on each side with artificial flowers, highly scented. On one side stood, on a pedestal, a marble statue of Silence, with this inscription:

"TUTATUR SOMNOS ET AMORES CONSCIA LECTI*."

On the other, a very lofty gold stand, for a taper or lamp. A fine mirror filled up one side of the bed, and was reflected by one at the top, and another at the opposite side of the room. The walls were covered with mahogany, relieved with gold borders, and now and then with glass. The whole in excellent taste. The bathing cabinet, which adjoined, was equally luxurious. The bath, when not in use, forms a sofa, covered with kerseymere edged with gold; and the whole of this cabinet is as pretty as the bed room. Beyond this room is the bed chamber of *monsieur*, plain, neat, and unaffected; and on the other

* Silence guards the slumbers and the loves of this bed.

side a little closet, covered with green silk, and opening on the garden, in which *madame* sits, when she amuses herself with drawing. To conclude, I find the "loves," which "Silence guards," and of which this paphian seat is the witness, are those of January and May; for the wife is twenty (the greatest beauty of Paris), and the husband something less than sixty.

I have made my letter of a most unpardonable length, and yet my subject is not complete. I will, however, stop for the present, only requesting your permission, when I have the opportunity, of adding such details, as I may be able to collect, relative to the different societies I have mentioned. Before I conclude, I ought, perhaps, to mention, that the generals are seen both in the second and third classes, but rarely in the first. Subalterns do not mix in society, at least, I have not yet met one in company.

Adieu.

LETTER V.

Opening of the legislative body.—Election of the president.—Lord Cornwallis.—Reflections of the people in the gallery.

Paris, november the 23d, 1801 (2 frimaire).

MY DEAR SIR,

YESTERDAY being the first of "frimaire," the day on which, by the present constitution, the legislature and tribunate begin their session, I determined to attend the opening of the former.

As I was not acquainted with any of the members, I was obliged, by means of a *silver ticket*, to seek admittance in one of the galleries devoted to the public. The legislative body holds its sittings in the beautiful palace, now called by its name, but better known by its former one, of *Palais Bourbon*. It is situate in the *Fauxbourg St. Germain*, immediately fronting *le pont Louis XVI*, and opposite the *Champs Elisées*. The hall, in which the members assemble, is a very fine room, in which the council of five hundred sat during the directorial government. It is large, of an octagon shape, and would be admirably suited to the purpose, for which it is used, did not its extreme height and arched roof prevent even the strongest voice from being distinctly heard. To remedy this defect,

green baize is suspended on several parts of the wall; but the evil is but little removed by this precaution. The first thing which attracted my attention, was the military parade, in which the members entered the room, and the regimental *costume*, in which they were dressed. Drums and fifes announced their approach; and a guard of honour (for both the corps legislatif and the tribunate have each a regiment) preceded them. The members wear a uniform of blue cloth, embroidered with gold, a tricoloured sash, hussar boots, and a cocked hat, both laced with gold. To an english eye, they had more the appearance of naval officers than of legislators. The meeting was opened by the minister of the *interieur*, who ascending the tribun, (or rostrum), congratulated, in a short speech, the corps legislatif on commencing its session, at a moment when the restoration of peace with all the world confirmed the victories, and completed the happiness of the republic. The eldest member then took the chair, and declared the meeting legally constituted. They next proceeded to choose a president. Scrutineers were appointed to examine the votes, which were given in the following manner: The names of the members were alphabetically called over, and each in his turn placed a written paper, containing the name of the person whom he chose into one of four vases, which were placed on the table for that purpose. When

all the members had voted, the four vases were placed on as many different tables, and each examined by an equal number of scrutineers. These counted the votes, and conveyed the result to the temporary president, who, after comparing them together, declared that *Dupuis*, having an absolute majority of 133 voices, was duly elected. The former then left the *fauteuil**, to which the latter was instantly conducted. On taking the chair, Dupuis ordered messages to be sent to the consuls and tribunate, acquainting them, that the *corps legislatif* was definitively constituted, and was ready to receive the messengers of the government. He then drew from his pocket a written paper, and read a speech, in which he congratulated the meeting on the happy auspices under which it began its session. He had scarcely finished, when the sound of drum and fife announced the arrival of three counsellors of state, with a message from the government. They were preceded by *huissiers*, or ushers, in spanish hats, with three plumes of different colours, and were dressed themselves in their *grand costume* of scarlet cloth, embroidered with silk of the same colour. One of them then ascended the rostrum, and read a short speech, declaring what the consuls had done, and what still further they proposed. He congratulated

* President's chair.

the legislature on the peace, and reminded the members, that the war being now over, they could devote their whole time to the happiness and tranquillity of the people. He concluded with complimenting the assembly on the conduct which they had pursued in their last session, and which, he said, they would doubtless continue in that which was now begun. The president assured him, in reply, that the legislative body would, on all occasions, be ready to assist the views of government in promoting the glory, the peace, and the happiness of the nation.

The counsellors of state then retired, and the president read the *procès-verbal* of the proceedings and appointments of the *sénat conservateur*, as likewise several letters; some from members, with excuses for nonattendance; others with resignations; and some from authors, presenting books, almanacks, &c. to the legislature. The title of one dedication entertained me not a little. It was addressed, "*Au Corps Législatif, au premier Consul,* et à madame Bonaparte*." We may conclude, that the writer was at once a republican and a courtier. Inconsistencies are often reconciled in France.

After these letters had been read, the meeting was closed. The austrian, english, swedish, and

* To the Legislative Body, to the first Consul, and to madame Bonaparte.

other ambassadors, were present, in a box appropriated to their use. The venerable appearance and military dress of my lord Cornwallis delighted the parisians; and my national vanity was not a little gratified, by the favourable comparison which the people around me drew between his lordship and the other foreign ministers. "*Oui, oui, ce grand est milord Cornvalis. Il a bonne mine. Il a l'air militaire. Il a servi, n'est il pas vrai, monsieur? C'est un galant homme, regardez ce petit à côtè, quelle différence! quelle mauvaise tournure, &c**."

I believe, indeed, that, on every account, we have reason to be satisfied with the choice which our government has made of the noble marquis. While in exteriors he satisfies the curiosity of the french, and the pride of the english, he gives, by the respectability of his character, the dignity of his deportment, and the known moderation of his principles, the surest pledge of the pacific intentions of the sovereign, whom he so worthily represents.

Before I conclude this long account, I must mention, with regret, that the persons in the gallery where I sat, spoke with the most sovereign contempt of the legislative body. "Ils font

* Yes, yes, that tall man is lord Cornwallis. He has a fine figure. He looks like a military man. He has served in the army. Is it not true, sir? Look at that little man near him, what a difference! what a mean appearance!

bien*," said one man, alluding to the boots, which constitute part of their dress; " de porter des bottes. C'est un habit de voyage—ils ne resteront pas ici long temps."—" *Nous les payons* 10,000 *francs*†," said another, " *pour ne faire rien, je suis étonné que Bonaparte ne se débarasse pas de ces gens là.*"—" *Je crois bien,*" cried a third, addressing himself to me, " *que monsieur votre ambassadeur a un revenu à lui plus grand, que celui de tous ces gaillards ensemble. Sans leur traitement de législateur ils mouroient de faim*‡."

It is contrary to my plan to enter on any political subjects, or the strange levity of these remarks would lead to some very serious reflections. I only give you this *chit chat* of the *peuple souverain*‖, as characteristic of the french, and of the present order of public affairs.

I am, &c.

* " They do right," said one, " to wear boots—it is a travelling dress. They will not stay here long."

† We pay them ten thousand francs for doing nothing. I am astonished Bonaparte does not get rid of these fellows.

‡ I believe that your ambassador has an income of his own, larger than that of all these fellows together. Without their salary of legislators, they would die of hunger.

‖ The sovereign people.

LETTER VI.

The abbé Sicard, and the institution in behalf of the deaf and dumb.—His favourite pupil, Massieu.—Examination of a young woman, who had become deaf at six years old.—Reflections on the establishment.

Paris, december the 1st, 1801 (10 frimaire.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I Had this morning so high a mental treat, that I cannot help communicating to you the particulars without delay, in the hope of being able, while my mind is strongly impressed with the subject, to convey to you some faint idea of the pleasure which I received.

I shall not now speak to you of splendid buildings, of glorious monuments of human ingenuity, of renowned heroes, or of brilliant festivals. What I saw to day interested me, and I am sure would have interested you, much more than all such objects united; I mean, the *institution des sourd-muets* (that humane establishment for the instruction of the deaf and dumb), first founded under the care of the abbé l'Epée, and now conducted by his worthy successor, the abbé Sicard.

Having tickets offered me for an extraordinary meeting, which took place this morning, I willingly availed myself of the opportunity, and at

ten o'clock repaired to *la rue St. Jacque*, where, in a former convent, this beneficent establishment is carried on. Here I found a large assemblage of respectable persons, who all listened, with pleasure and attention, to the simple, plain, and unaffected manner, in which the abbé Sicard explained his method of giving to the deaf and dumb the means of expressing their thoughts. "As foreigners," said he, "unacquainted with the language of the country which they visit, are supposed stupid and ignorant by the uninformed, so the deaf and dumb are often considered as idiots, because they are deprived of one sense. No," continued he, "they are not idiots; they have ideas as well as you, and only want an organ to express them." He then went on to state, that in most educations children are taught first to speak, and then, *sometimes*, to think; whereas, in his plan, he began first by teaching his pupils to think, and then proceeded to instruct them how to express what they had so thought*.

* The abbé Sicard, in the course of this lecture, took occasion to remark, that of all languages, the english was the most simple, the most reasonable, and the most natural, in its construction. As a proof of the truth of his assertion, he informed us, that his pupils, as they began to learn the means of conveying their thoughts by writing, were constantly guilty of *anglicisms*. He added, that it was difficult to make them lay aside idioms purely english, and still more so, to teach them those which are peculiar to the french language.

To exemplify both his plan and his success, he examined Massien, his favourite and ablest pupil, a young man, about twenty or twenty five years old. As soon as the abbé expressed, by his gestures, any particular passion, Massien instantly wrote the word appropriate to the peculiar feeling, and then explained the meaning of the word he had written, with a vivacity of action, and a variety of countenance, which I never before witnessed in any human being. He next wrote on the wall, with great rapidity, the chain of ideas, by which the abbé Sicard regularly advances his scholars, from the expression of a simple thought, to one of greater import. Thus, beginning with the word "voir," to see, he ended, going on by regular steps, with the word "examiner," to examine; beginning with "idéer," (a word created by Massien, but answering to "*avoir idée*," or to have an idea), he ended with "approfondir," to search into; and beginning with "vouloir," to will, he ended with "bruler," to burn with passion. Massien expressed, with wonderful fire, the meaning of each progressive passion, in the changes of his countenance, which, when animated, is uncommonly fine.

In the course of this meeting, the *abbé Sicard* likewise examined, for the first time, a young woman, now eighteen, who, at six years old, had become entirely deaf, and who could now only

speak such words as she had learnt at that tender age, many of which she still pronounced imperfectly, and as children are apt to do. He began with showing us a memorandum, or washing bill, in which this girl had drawn her gowns, petticoats, &c. according to the different forms of these articles. Massien then, by direction of the *abbé*, drew on the wall different things of common use; to some of these she applied their proper names, some she did not know, and others she mispronounced. The latter defect M. Sicard immediately removed, by pronouncing the word himself, teaching her by signs to move her lips, as he did, by blowing on the hand, and by touching some particular fibres of the arm. I cannot satisfactorily explain this operation; but it will, perhaps, be sufficient to observe, that the *abbé*, more than once, said, "by such and such motions, I will produce such and such sounds:" and that, as soon as the girl had imitated the motions he made, she articulated the words, as he had previously promised.

The more I saw of this institution, the more was I delighted. There were forty or fifty children present, who, born deaf and dumb, were, by the wonderful skill and unceasing care of the respectable *abbé*, restored to society, to happiness, and themselves. They were seated in different parts of the room, and conversed with each other, though at the greatest distance, by the

means of their fingers, which were in constant motion. They had every appearance of enjoying good health, spirits, and vivacity.

There are all kinds of workshops, manufactures, and schools, in the house of the *sourd-muets*, and the establishment is entirely maintained at the expense of the government. Massien, I hear, has displayed strong symptoms of genius, and has even written some very beautiful verses.

How admirable is this institution! How honourable to the ingenuity and the heart of man! To restore to all the enjoyments of life, and to the dignity of rational beings, hapless creatures, doomed by the caprice of Nature to inexpressible feeling and irremediable ignorance, is perhaps the highest and proudest effort of human contrivance.

Of all which I have yet beheld at Paris, this is to me the most interesting sight. Other objects strike the imagination, but this moves the heart. Farewel, my dear sir, the night is far advanced; but I could not place my head on the pillow, till I had attempted to communicate to you, how much I had been pleased with this admirable and philanthropic institution.

I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

A *thé* or evening party.—French remarks on Shakspeare, and Mr. Fox.—Dullness and pedantry of parisian society.

Paris, december 3d, 1801 (3 frimaire).

MY DEAR SIR,

I Have just received your last letter, and as you complain, that I am not sufficiently minute in my descriptions of private society, I will endeavour to satisfy your curiosity, by giving a faithful account of an assembly, or *thé*, as it is called here, to which I was invited a few evenings since.

The lady, at whose house this entertainment was given, belonged to the old court; but having remained in France during the whole of the revolution, has preserved her property. I drove to her hotel, about eight in the evening, and after passing through a dark and dirty antichamber, in which her servants and those of her guests sat very quietly, while I passed, without moving from their seats. I found my way, not without difficulty, into the " *salon*," or drawing room: In this apartment, the walls of which bore the faint semblance of having been painted white, some thirty years before, and on which shattered remnants of tarnished gold might still be discovered,

I perceived near the fire, the lady of the mansion. She half rose from her seat, as I approached, and after a short "bon jour monsieur," continued in a whisper, an earnest conversation, in which she was engaged with an old gentleman, who, as I have since learnt, was a *ci-devant duke*, lately returned from emigration. As I was left entirely to myself, (for I was introduced to no one) I had ample time to examine every thing around me. The room, sombre in itself, was rendered still more so, by a patent lamp suspended in the middle, which was the only light I perceived, and which simply answered the purpose of making "darkness visible."

There were about twenty or thirty persons assembled, of different ages, and of different sexes. Having heard so much of french gayety, I was astonished at the melancholy countenances I saw around me, and at the general stupidity of this party. In one corner was placed a whist table, at which, two *ci-devant* countesses, a member of *l'ancienne académie française*, and a former *financier* were disputing for *sous*. There were round the fire, two rows of *fauteuils*, or arm chairs, in which the ladies not occupied with cards, were seated in awful state. Two or three young men dressed *à l'anglaise*, with the preposterous addition of immense neckcloths, ear rings, and half a dozen under waistcoats, lounged about the middle of the room, and now and then

caught a glimpse at their favourite persons, in an adjoining glass. The fire was monopolized by a party of zealous disputants, who, turning their backs to the company, and talking all together, formed a separate group, or rather a debating society, round the chimney. From the loudness of their voices, and the violence of their gestures, I supposed they were discussing some great national question, and expecting to gain much useful intelligence, listened with all the painful attention of extreme curiosity. I soon discovered, to my no small astonishment, that it was not the fate of the nation, but the accuracy of an expression, which excited their zeal. The abbé Delille had, it seems, in a poem lately published, used this phrase,

"Je n'entends que silence, je ne vois que la nuit*."

Whether it was possible "to hear silence," and "see night," was the great subject of dispute; and the metaphysical distinctions, nice definitions, and pedantic remarks, which this question excited, formed a curious specimen of the french character. Some of the ladies joined in the debate; and I know not to what height it might have been carried, had not the arrival of the *thé* interrupted the orators, and stopped the conversation, with a subject more agreeable to the general taste.

* I only hear silence, and see night.

At twelve o'clock, the beverage I have mentioned, which the french think unwholesome at all times, and which even the english fear to take at so late an hour, was placed near the fire, on a large table, surrounded with cakes, creams, custards, a large tureen of soup, and a bowl of punch, the party crowded round the table, and helped themselves to the refreshments it contained. When the ceremony was over, those who did not return to the card tables, entered into conversation; and as literary subjects were still the favourite theme, a young man, with a pompous manner, and a solemn tone of voice, said, addressing himself to me, "Is it true, sir, that there are englishmen, so blinded by national prejudice, as to prefer '*votre*' *bizarre* Shakspeare*, to our divine Racine?" Endeavouring to avoid a discussion, which I knew the answer I was inclined to give would create, I contented myself with observing, that Shakspeare and Racine were such different authors, that it was absurd to compare them. "As well," said I, "might you draw a resemblance between the beauties of Switzerland, and those of Versailles." "The proper simile," retorted the first speaker, "would be between Versailles and a barren heath, on which some few beautiful plants may have been accidentally scattered, by the capri-

* Your droll Shakspeare.

cious hand of nature." The whole circle joined in the triumph, which my antagonist supposed he had gained, and I in vain attempted to recapitulate, and to translate some of the striking passages of Shakespear. Though all condemned our "heaven-inspired poet," I soon perceived, that few had ever read, and none understood the sublime work which they presumed to criticise.

"Speaking of english authors," cried the member of the ci-devant académie française, "makes one think of english orators. I see, by Chateau-Brian's account of England, that the cause of Mr. Fox's retirement from parliament, has been at last discovered; and that it arose from his mental powers having been weakened by the effect of excessive drinking. To this I suppose one must attribute his late unwarrantable attack on the house of Bourbon."

Astonished at this extraordinary assertion, I took the liberty of assuring the gentleman, that Mr. Fox's talents were as perfect as ever, and that his last speech was one of the finest efforts of human reasoning. "*Pardonnez,*" cried the academician, "Mr. Fox could never reason. He was indeed once a fine declaimer, but as to the powers of argument, he never possessed them." I was ridiculous enough to combat this absurd opinion, and to assure him, that there was not an englishman, (whatever his political sentiments might be) who would not willingly

bear testimony to the wonderful argumentative talents of the extraordinary man in question.

I talked in vain, the whole company joined with the academician, who *pour toute réponse**, said, "*C'est Mr. Pitt, qui sait raisonner, mais pour Mr. Fox il déclame joliment, voilà tout son talent. Vous me permetterez* de savoir!" assuming a look of great dignity, "*parceque c'est* moi qui *a traduit ses discours.*" So saying, he turned away, and soon after the company dispersed.

Can I give you a stronger instance of the *taste* and *justice*, with which the french pronounce on the merits of our authors, and public characters?

If Shakspeare is not a poet, nor Mr. Fox an orator, where are we to look for examples of perfection?

Thus it is on every subject in this country. The french suppose, that they understand english books, and english politics, much better than we do; and this is not the first lesson which I have received. I have often been contradicted on constitutional, as well as literary questions; and I have always found, that the company supported

* By way of an unanswerable argument, said, "It is Mr. Pitt who understands reasoning; but as to Mr. Fox, he can declaim prettily: all his talent consists in this. You will allow me to know, for it was I," assuming a look of great dignity, "who translated his speeches."

not the opinion of the native, whose local knowledge deserved some little credit, but the bold assertion of their countryman, who was generally believed and applauded, in proportion to the extravagance and singularity of the doctrine which he laid down.

I forgot to mention, that great offence being taken at Mr. Fox's remarks on the old government, a gentleman took great pains to persuade me, that *l'ancienne régime* was the freest constitution under the sun. You will not be surprised to hear, that he did not make me a convert to his opinion, and that I assured him, if such was a free government, I hoped it would be long, very long, before England should possess it.

This evening's entertainment gave me altogether but a very unfavourable opinion, both of french society, french taste, and french gallantry. There was no mirth, no general conversation, and scarcely any intercourse between the men and women. As to Mrs. ——, she was left to the uninterrupted enjoyment of her own thoughts, for no person took the trouble of addressing her. Her english dress, however, did not escape the criticism of the ladies; and my pronunciation was equally a source of amusement to the gentlemen. I shall only add, that if this be a specimen of french society, I may obtain much information at Paris; yet I shall certainly receive but little pleasure from my journey.

I am, &c.

LETTER VIII.

Bonaparte.—The monthly review or parade in the court of the Thuilleries.

Paris, december the 6th, 1801, (15 frimaire.)

MY DEAR SIR,

MY curiosity is at last gratified. I have seen Bonaparte. You will readily conceive how much pleasure I felt to day, in beholding, for the first time, this extraordinary man, on whose single exertions the fate of France, and in many respects that of Europe, has for some time depended.

I was fortunate enough to obtain places in one of the apartments of *Duroc*, the governor of the palace, from the windows of which I saw the review to the greatest advantage. It is impossible to describe the impatience with which we awaited the appearance of Bonaparte. Mrs. ——— well observed, that her eyes ached with looking.

As soon as the court of the Thuilleries, (that is to say the ground, which is enclosed with iron railings, near the Carousel,) was filled with the different regiments, who arranged themselves with wonderful skill, and without the least confusion, notwithstanding the limited space allotted them,

the generals descended from their horses, went up stairs into the palace, and, after some little delay, conducted Bonaparte to the door. He instantly sprang on his white charger, (which waited for him at the gate) and commenced the review. As he passed several times before the window where I sat, I had ample time to examine his countenance, his figure, his dress, and his manner. His complexion is uncommonly sallow, his countenance expressive but stern, his figure little but well made, and his whole person, like the mind which it contains, singular and remarkable. If I were compelled to compare him to any one, I should name Kemble, the actor. Though Bonaparte is much less in size, and less handsome than that respectable performer, yet in the construction of the features, and in the general expression, there is a strong resemblance. There is, however, such originality about the appearance of the first consul, that, without having seen him, it is difficult to form an idea of his person. The picture of Bonaparte at the review, exhibited some time back in Piccadilly, and the bust in *Sèvre china*, which is very common at Paris, and which has probably become equally so in London, are the best likenesses I have seen. As to his dress, he wore the grand *costume* of his office, that is to say a scarlet velvet coat, richly embroidered with gold, to this he had added leather breeches, jockey boots, and a little plain cocked hat,

the only ornament of which was a national cockade. His hair unpowdered was cut close in his neck.

After riding through the ranks, and receiving the salutes of the officers, he passed by every regiment, the colours of which were lowered as he went on. He then placed himself in the middle of the parade, and his generals and aides-de-camp having formed a group around him, he distributed swords and firelocks of honour to such officers and soldiers, as in different campaigns had deserved them. Berthier, the companion of his victories, and now minister of war, presented one by one these articles to Bonaparte, who having read the inscription which was engraved on each, recording the action by which it was deserved, delivered with his own hands the respective badges of honour. After this ceremony was over, the different regiments passed by the first consul, and the captain of each company or troop saluted him in passing. The cavalry went in full gallop, and as they approached him stopped with wonderful neatness. Thus concluded the review. He then rode with his officers to the palace gate, dismounted, and retired to his apartments, followed by the generals and a strong detachment of men.

The *spectacle* was altogether extremely brilliant. The windows of the palace, of the gallery of the Louvre, and of all the adjoining houses were filled with ladies elegantly dressed, and the

iron gates which separate the court from the palace, were surrounded by the people. I shall say nothing of the discipline of the troops, not being a military man, and consequently little conversant with such matters. I shall only speak of what struck the eye. The consular guards are the handsomest men I ever saw, scarcely any are less than six feet high, and if we may believe the report of persons connected with the government, every individual in the corps owes his situation to long service, or some distinguished act of valour. Their uniform is a long coat of fine blue cloth, faced with white, and edged with red, with a yellow button, on which is written "*garde des consuls.*" They wear white waistcoats and breeches, and a fur cap, with a gilt plate, on which appears the same inscription as that on the buttons. "*La garde consulaire à cheval,*" or consular horse guard, wears the same uniform as the foot of that service. The dragoons are dressed in green, with a casque, from which is suspended a large braid of hair.

Several regiments of the line, which formed part of the review, have been highly distinguished during the war, particularly the celebrated *demi-brigade*, which at Marengo is said to have saved the life of Bonaparte, when in the ardour of battle he had exposed himself to almost certain destruction. These regiments were ill dressed, the men were little, and their whole appearance was, when

compared with the consular guard, far from favourable. The *guides* commanded by the young Beauharnois, (madame Bonaparte's son) were very elegantly dressed in scarlet hussar uniforms, and mounted on light bay horses, splendidly caparisoned. Generally speaking, the horses of the cavalry were very indifferent, excepting one fine regiment of blacks, which was commanded by Louis Bonaparte, the third brother of the consul.

As soon as Bonaparte left the ground the regiments began to file off by different gates, in the same good order in which they had arrived, and though nearly ten thousand men had been on the parade, in less than a quarter of an hour not an individual remained.

The generals wear blue uniforms, richly embroidered, with tricoloured sashes. The aides-de-camp are very handsome young men, dressed in blue jackets, long pantaloons, and hussar cloaks, the whole almost covered with gold. I remarked amongst them Lauriston, who took the preliminary ratification to London, and young le Brun, son of the third consul, who at the battle of Marengo, behaved with uncommon valour, and received in his arms the unfortunate and gallant Dessaix†. I make no apology for the length of this letter, for knowing that you wished to have

† General Dessaix, by whose valour the battle of Marengo, in which he fell, was principally gained.

a particular account of the consular reviews, I have been purposely as minute as possible. These reviews regularly take place on the 15th of every month, according to the republican calendar.

Adieu!

LETTER IX.

The tribunate.—Speech of *Portalis* on presenting the *code civil* in the corps legislatif.—Debate in the tribunate on the same subject.

Paris, december the 20th, 1801, (29th frimaire).

MY DEAR SIR,

I WENT this morning to the *tribunate*, which holds its sitting in the *ci-devant* Palais royal, in order to hear discussed the proposed project of civil laws. This reminds me, that by a strange and unaccountable omission, I have not in any of my letters mentioned the speech, which the celebrated Portalis delivered on the 24th of last month, in presenting the measure to the *corps legislatif*, and which speech I was so fortunate as to hear. To remedy my neglect, I shall begin my letter with mentioning what past on that occasion; and shall conclude it with the debate, which took place to day, on the same subject, in the tribunate.

Portalis is a man of grave, respectable appearance, about fifty years old, and so short-sighted, as to be nearly blind. As soon as he ascended the rostrum, the utmost silence prevailed, and the legislators seemed to listen with that profound attention, which is only given to those from whom we expect either amusement

or instruction. As for me, I received both from his discourse; and I do not remember to have been yet so well contented with a public speaker in France. He spoke for rather more than an hour and a half, without notes and without hesitation. He explained with precision, the principles and the heads of the code, which he was ordered to lay before the legislature; and while he was clear and intelligible in every part of his speech, he was frequently extremely eloquent. His principal aim seemed to be, as he expressed it, "de profiter des lumières de notre tems, mais pas de les avancer*." He particularly recommended a system of laws, corresponding with those of other nations, and which should strengthen the ties of matrimony, and the security of domestic happiness. Among the many strong expressions, with which his speech abounded, I remarked the following. "*Pour aimer le monde entier, on peut dire, il faut aimer premièrement sa patrie, mais celui qui commenceroit à aimer le monde entier, finira à n'aimer aucun pays*†. *La philosophie a fait son devoir,*

* To take advantage of the discoveries of the present age, but not to run before them.

† To love the world at large, it may be truly said, that we ought first to love our own country; but he who begins with loving the world at large, will probably end in not loving any country whatever. Philosophy has

c'est à vous, citoyens législateurs d'achever le votre. La philosophie commence à faire le bonheur des hommes, mais c'est la législation qui l'achève, &c." The legislature ordered his speech to be printed, and adjourned.

To day this important question was debated in the tribunate; and I must confess, that the expectations, which I had formed, were not a little disappointed. I did not, it is true, flatter myself with the idea of hearing either a Fox, a Pitt, a Sheridan, or a Mirabeau; but I imagined, that among the members of the only deliberative assembly, now in France, some few men would be found capable of discussing with sense, argument, and extended views, a measure so important, not only to the present happiness of the country, but to that also of the latest posterity. It would be too presumptuous to say, that there are no such men in the tribunate. On the contrary, I know, that there are some members of very superiour knowledge, great genius, and liberal principles. I shall be forgiven, however, for remarking, that the talent displayed on this occasion was by no means equal to the dignity of the subject in question, or worthy the assembly in which it was discussed. Five or six members

done its duty; it is for you, citizen legislators, to discharge yours. Philosophy begins the happiness of men; but it is legislation which completes it, &c.

had put their names down, as intending to speak, and each was heard in his turn. Nothing could be duller than these speeches; every one of which was read from a written paper. A very ridiculous circumstance arose from this manner of speaking. As each of the discourses had been previously prepared, there was no reference to the arguments used in the debate; and the advocates and opposers of the measure, equally disregarded, and left unanswered, the remarks of those who happened to precede them in the debate. I was not a little entertained with the conceit of one of these lamp-oil orators, who discovered, that unless they restored *la loi d'aubaine**, englishmen might buy up all the woods of France, and thus, at one blow, deprive the government of its ships, and the people of their fuel.

The only decent speech delivered on the occasion was by the celebrated Boissy d'Anglass†, who

* "La loi d'aubaine," by which foreigners were prevented from inheriting or purchasing lands in France.

† Boissy d'Anglass. This worthy man was president of the national assembly on one of those occasions, when the mob burst into the hall, and attempted to dictate to the members.

With heroic courage, he refused to put any question, while the rabble remained in the assembly; and persevered in his resolution, notwithstanding the poignards which were raised against him, and the dreadful example of one of his colleagues, who was murdered by his side.

adduced some very strong reasons against the proposed project. Speaking of England, he called the climate, "*ce climate ténébreux et humide**."

The expression may apply; but from the damp and foggy weather, which, during some time has prevailed at Paris, I am apt to think, that it is not exclusively descriptive of Great Britain.

After this tame and languid debate, more resembling the dull repetition of school boy's exercises, than the speeches of a great popular assembly, the measure was rejected by a large majority.

I shall make no remarks on this decision, as doing so would necessarily lead into a political discussion, which it is my great object to avoid.

The tribunes, being but one hundred in number, sit in a small hall appropriate to their use. There is a gallery, which from the specimen of eloquence displayed this day, I was not surprised to find nearly empty. The tribunes wear a uniform of blue cloth, embroidered with silver, hussar boots also edged with silver, white waistcoats, blue pantaloons, and a tricoloured sash. They also begin and end their meetings with military honours.

I am, &c.

* That dark and wet climate.

LETTER X.

"*Bal des étrangers,*" (a public subscription ball).—Thinness of the ladies' dresses.

Paris, december 27th, 1801 (6th nivôse.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I WAS last night at a public ball, given by a club or society, called, "le salon des étrangers." This is an establishment, formed on the plan of our subscription houses in England, and lately opened in an handsome hotel in *la rue Grange Batelière*, the windows of which look on the Boulevard. It consists of frenchmen, who are admitted by ballot, and of foreigners of all nations. The latter are received, (being introduced by a member) on paying the annual subscription of five louis. The house is handsomely furnished, and consists of several large rooms, which are open every morning and evening, for the use of the subscribers. Besides the ordinary games played in such sort of houses, there is a very excellent billiard table, and a room fitted up for reading, in which are found periodical publications, and all the newspapers, french, german, and english. It was this latter circumstance which induced me to subscribe; and it is here where I usually end my walk, and amuse

myself for half an hour, in running over the publications of the day.

The club or society, by way I suppose of gaining to its aid the protection and interest of the fair, without which nothing is to be done in France, nor, to speak the truth, any where else, gives a ball, about once in ten days, and it was at one of these assemblies, that I was present last night.

At twelve o'clock, Mrs. —— and I drove to "le salon des étrangers," (for no ball begins at an earlier hour) and the string of carriages was so very long, that we were nearly an hour in getting up to the door. I cannot help taking this opportunity, of commending the admirable order preserved by the police, on all such occasions at Paris. Though, from several streets meeting on the Boulevard, the crowd was great, yet there was not the least accident, nor even the smallest confusion. The staircase, by which we ascended, was elegantly ornamented with orange, and other artificial flower trees. When we entered the outward room, there were already so many persons assembled, that it was not without considerable difficulty, that we made our way into the *salon*, or drawing room. Never shall I forget my surprise, when, looking round me, I perceived the dress, or rather the nakedness of the ladies. I had heard much of the indecency, of which some females were guilty, in respect to *costume* at

Paris, and I had already seen specimens of the thinnesss of their apparel; but till this evening, I thought it only the failing of a few. I now saw at least two hundred women, of different ages, and different situations in life, all displaying, without reserve or disguise, the beauties, which they had either received from nature, imitated by art, or believed themselves by the aid of flattering fancy to possess. The young and the old, the handsome and the ugly, the fair and the brown, all prodigally dragged into common view, those charms, which a virtuous woman conceals from motives of modesty, and a sensualist from those of discretion. The buxom girl of sixteen, the newly married woman, and the superannuated mother of a numerous family, were all equally exposed. Naked necks, naked backs, and their form, scarcely concealed by a transparent petticoat, left nothing to the powers of fancy.

You will think, perhaps, that I am drawing an exaggerated picture; but I can assure you, on the honour of a man of truth, that such was the *costume* of at least two thirds of the ladies present at this ball. The head-dresses, classically imitated from the ancient statues, were elegant; and the number of diamonds, pearls, and other precious stones, strikingly brilliant. There were many handsome women; but their beauty was uniformly of one kind. The *embonpoint*, and the *nez retroussé*, characterised them all. I looked

in vain for those graceful figures, and those grecian countenances, which form so often the ornament of an english assembly. Among the most celebrated belles, madame R——, the young wife of an affluent banker, was pointed out to me; madame V——, an italian lady, much the fashion at Paris, and the renowned madame Tallien. I think the first rather remarkable, for the singularity of her dress, (her head being ornamented "*à la cochoise*," that is to say, as the peasants of a particular province dress their hair) her extreme fairness, and downcast look, than for any real extraordinary beauty. Madame V—— is a fine dark woman, "*d'un certaine age*," with beautiful eyes, and a commanding person. Madame Tallien, notwithstanding her great fame, has, according to me, rather an agreeable countenance, and an enchanting smile, than features excessively striking. She is fair, as the fairest of our countrywomen; her neck is beautiful; and her countenance, mild and good humoured, is said to be a true picture of her mind. Yet, in spite of these advantages, I never should have discovered in her, the reigning *belle* of Paris. She, too, is not in the first bloom of youth. The dances were, the cotillon, (which they call *la contredanse*) and the walse. In the former, the ladies displayed that decided superiority, which the french possess in the art of dancing. As to the walse, I was astonished at

the decency, with which that very indecent dance was danced, by the young parisians; who, placing their arms round the uncovered persons of the handsomest women in the room, yet had sufficient command of themselves, not to shock either their partners, or the company, by being guilty of the slightest impropriety. I expressed my surprise to an elderly lady, at this extraordinary forbearance. "*Croyez moi, monsieur**", she replied, "*que nos jeunes gens voient tout cela avec l'indifférence la plus parfaite.*"

What a lesson does this remark hold out to the fair sex, of every description! That female is not less deficient in coquetry, and in the art of commanding the affections of men, than in every principle of decency, who wantonly exposes to the common gaze of passing curiosity those attractions, which are only valuable, as long as the sight of them is the exclusive privilege of a favoured lover.

The libertine, if he at first looks on with admiration, soon ceases to care for that which every eye may behold; and apathy, united to contempt, is the sentiment which succeeds to passion.

I return to the ball. The crowd became greater and greater, and the heat was excessive; but the scene altogether was lively and amusing.

* Believe me, sir, our young men see all this with the most perfect indifference.

A frenchman *de l'ancien régime,* hearing me express my surprise at the *costume* of the ladies, assured me, that excepting the foreigners, there was not one woman *de bonne compagnie* in the room. This term of "*bonne compagnie,*" is so often used, and so seldom explained, that I really do not know, whether he meant that there was not a woman of the old court, or that there was not a virtuous female present. If he intended the former, it only proved, that these balls were not frequented by the *noblesse;* if the latter, he was much severer in his remark than I had been. I only complained of the ladies being indecent; he asserted that they were profligate. At any rate, the one fault leads so rapidly to the other, that it was difficult to make a mistake.

The room was well lighted; the music excellent, and the ball, being formed of all the different classes of society, highly entertaining to a foreigner. There were a great many english present; most of the ambassadors, and many other distinguished characters.

I returned home about three in the morning.

Adieu.

LETTER XI.

New year's day.—The Palais royal.

Paris, january the 1st, 1802 (11 nivose.)

MY DEAR SIR,

THE people of all nations cling, with such fond partiality, to their old customs, that it is next to impossible to eradicate even the most trifling of these by the power of law. I remarked a strong proof of this to day. It was an immemorial custom in France to celebrate new year's day, by making presents of confectionary, trinkets, and other such articles, to near relations and particular friends.

Notwithstanding the republican almanack, and the use of it in all public acts, newspapers, &c. which makes the year begin with vendemiaire, answering to our 23d of september, the first of january is still considered as solely entitled to these honours. The Palais royal, as it is universally called (notwithstanding its first revolutionary and already superannuated name of "*Jardin d'Egalité*," and its present constitutional one of "Palais du Tribunat,") was thronged this morning with persons of all classes, who soon dispersed themselves among the various shops, in order to purchase these little annual presents, or "étrennes," as they are called in the language

of the country. The jewellers vied with each other in displaying, in their windows, all the taste, fashion, and magnificence, of their choicest merchandise; and diamond rings, pearl lockets, and amber necklaces, offered to gallantry elegant but expensive means of testifying its ardour. The milliners brought forth their finest lace, their most tawdry colours, and their most extravagant patterns; and the confectioners, with streamers at their door, ornamented cakes within, perfumed *bon bons*, and amorous mottoes, soon found the means of filling their respective shops.

What an extraordinary place is the Palais royal! There is nothing like it in any town in Europe. I remember hearing an english epicure once observe, "that as soon as the peace took place, he would give himself the happiness of passing six weeks in the Palais royal, without once going out of its gates." Certainly, if a man be contented with sensual pleasures, there is not one which he may not gratify within the walls of this building. Restaurateurs, or taverns, where dinners are served from ten sols to two louis a head. Coffee houses, where, for threepence, the lounger may pass the whole of his day in playing chess, talking politics, or reading the papers. Gambling houses, where the man of pleasure, at the risk of all that is dearest to him in life, purchases the anxious feelings which fear and hope excite, and where the *chevalier*

d'industrie finds the disgraceful means of a dishonourable existence. Taylors, haberdashers, silversmiths, and watchmakers, offer every variety of clothing, of ornament, and of machinery. Booksellers' shops are seen in every corner, where the *homme de lettres* finds his favourite authors, the romantic young lady her novels, and the politician his pamphlets. Opticians, where the frequenter of *spectacles* purchases his opera glass, and the philosopher his telescope. Crowds of unfortunate, and sometimes lovely females, challenge, with every variety of dress, the attention of passengers, and, while they offer a too easy banquet to libertines and dotards, fill every reflecting mind with pity and with sorrow. Such are the objects which the *Palais royal* presents. I ought to add, that while the cellars are filled with inferiour *restaurateurs*, or eating houses, where bands of music are constantly playing, frequently dressed in theatrical *costumes*, the upper rooms are occupied with gambling parties, *cabinets* of intrigue, and coffeehouses *. The latter have every variety of de-

* Coffeehouses. — The number of coffeehouses (properly so called, as coffee and *liqueurs* are the only articles which they supply) is very great at Paris, and they are constantly crowded. Swarms of idle persons spend their lives at these places, playing chess, talking politics, reading the journals, or sitting still. I have often counted more than one hundred individuals in a coffeeroom of a

coration; some are painted to represent the Alps, and others are covered with glass, reflecting in every direction a different room. The gambling tables are numerous; and I am assured, that on the stairs, descending from one of these, there is a pawnbroker's shop, where it sometimes happens, that a ruined gamester, after losing the contents of his purse, deposits, for the sake of making a last and desperate effort, his watch, his buckles, and sometimes his coat. With the trifle

moderate size; and there is no hour of the day when the same scene does not present itself. Paris, under every government, and at all periods, will bear the same appearance as to amusements. Montesquieu, in his Persian Letters, gives the following description of the coffee houses of his time, which applies exactly to those of the day:

"*Le café est très en usage à Paris, il y a un grand nombre de maisons publiques, où on le distribue. Dans quelques unes de ces maisons on dit des nouvelles, dans d'autres on joue aux échecs. Il y en a une où l'on apprête le café, de telle manière qu'il donne de l'esprit à ceux qui en prennent; au moins, de tous ceux qui en sortent, il n'y a personne que ne croie qu'il en a quatre fois plus que lorsqu'il est entré.*"

"Coffee is much in use at Paris. There are a great many public houses where it is distributed. In some of these houses the news of the day is reported, and in others chess is played. There is one, in which coffee is prepared, in such an extraordinary manner, that it improves the intellects of those who take it; at least, of those who come from this house, there is not one who does not think himself four times as wise as when he went in."

advanced him he returns, and, if successful, redeems, on going away, the objects he has pledged. If he fail, a pistol, or the river, ends his miserable days. Such is the consequence of play, and such are the scenes which this profligate place presents.

The buildings, which formerly filled the centre, are now pulled down, and that part is really a garden, which many persons frequent for exercise. There are ice houses at each end, and chairs scattered about, on which the parisians sit in rows, and take lemonade and other refreshments. The space under the arcades, not occupied by the shops, is, as formerly, filled every hour of the day, and the greatest part of the night, with figures of all descriptions, with persons of every class, and, I might add, of every nation in the world.

" Le théâtre de Monteaussier" is still in the Palais royal, besides many smaller play houses. Puppet shows, dwarfs, giants, quack doctors, vociferating newsmen, and quiet venders of libels, who in a whisper offer you indecent and forbidden publications, complete the catalogue of manycoloured curiosities which this place presents.

Adieu. I dare not add the reflections which so singular a spot would naturally create. Were I to do so, scarcely a volume would contain them.

Adieu.

LETTER XII.

"*L'institution des travaux des aveugles,*" or establishment for the support and employment of the blind.—Their different occupations.—The plate glass manufactory.—Description of another meeting at the hospital of the deaf and dumb.—Massieu taught *galvanism* and stenography.

Paris, january the 16th, 1802 (26 nivose.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I WENT to day to see the establishment formed for the protection and instruction of the blind. It is salled "l'institution des travaux des aveugles *," and is situate in the Fauxbourg St. Antoine, not far from the *ci-devant Bastille.* It is here, where persons afflicted with that greatest of all human calamities, the loss of sight, are taught the means of gaining a comfortable existence, of occupying hours which would otherwise be painfully tiresome, and of rendering themselves useful to the community.

At the "séance," or public meeting, which I attended this morning, I saw several persons, men, women, and children, either born blind, or rendered so by illness, now able to read, to write, to count, to print, and to perform on different pieces of instrumental music. The mode by

* The establishment for the employment of the blind.

which they read is by feeling the letters, which are purposely raised on card; and they did so with such rapidity, that it was difficult in hearing them to discover their misfortune. What particularly struck me, was the ingenuity of a blind woman, who had taught her child to read, an infant about five years old, not afflicted with this calamity.

There is a manufactory of steel carried on in the building, in which the blind turn the wheel; and they also make whips, writing cases, purses, and paper toys of all sorts, which are sold for their private emolument. There is likewise a press, or printing machine, in which the whole process is performed by the blind; and I am told, books published by them, are more than commonly correct. The women knit, sew, and perform other kinds of needlework; and all of them either sing, or perform on some instrument. They gave us a kind of concert, which, if not very good, proved, at least, that they understood the principles of music. I am almost ashamed to mention, that my pleasure in witnessing this truly philanthropic establishment, was not a little diminished by the dreadful countenances of the blind, as the eyes of many, not being closed, exhibited a very disgusting appearance. I knew, indeed, that they were not sensible of this defect, and that I ought to be satisfied with an institution, which, in rendering them

both happy and useful, had fully discharged its object. To the truth of this reflection my reason fully assented; yet, *malgré moi* *, my senses revolted at the sight of human beings, left so imperfect by the hand of Nature, or so deformed by *illness*.

In leaving " les aveugles," we drove to the great plate glass manufactory, which is carried on in the neighbourhood. This celebrated establishment suffered severely during the revolution, but is now daily recovering its former prosperity. Six hundred persons are at present employed, and I saw mirrors preparing of various and extensive dimensions. The operation of pouring quicksilver on glass, by which it obtains its reflecting qualities, was performed before us; and we were much delighted with the rapidity and neatness shown in the process.

As I began this letter with the institution in favour of the blind, I think I cannot do better than to conclude it, by speaking to you again of that of the deaf and dumb. I have, since my first letter on that subject, attended two extraordinary meetings of the " *sourd muets*," the result of which I will now give you.

Massien, the deaf and dumb young man, of whose superiour talents and acquirements I gave you so favourable an account, appeared to great

* In spite of myself.

advantage at one of these, in which he received, for the first time, a lesson on "*galvanism.*" As soon as the abbé Sicard wrote on a slate, "galvanism is a name given to a mode of electricity, in consequence of its having been discovered by *Galvani*, an italian physician." Massien eagerly snatched the pencil, and wrote, in reply, "I saw the word galvanism in one of the newspapers; and not knowing what it meant, looked for an explanation in the dictionary of the academy. Not finding it there, I concluded that it was taken from a proper name. It then occurred to me, that it was a new medicine, discovered by the individual, whose name it bore; and that, perhaps, by means of this specific, the inventor might cure the deaf and dumb, *comme notre seigneur Jesus Christ* *."

Never shall I forget the animation which brightened the countenance of *Massien*, while he rapidly wrote these words, or the curious and anxious attention with which he followed the explanation afterwards given him of galvanism. In the course of the lecture, he showed, by his questions and answers, that he was perfectly conversant with the general principles of electricity; and the ease with which he caught the doctrine of galvanism was truly astonishing. I am sure you will be struck, as I was, at the

* As our Saviour did of old.

singularity of his conceiving, that galvanism might lead to the cure of the deaf and dumb. How kindly has Nature implanted in our minds a disposition to cherish hope, even on the slightest foundation! It is this which gives a zest to all our pursuits, which supports us in illness, in affliction, and in sorrow; and no man really ceases to be happy, till he ceases to hope.

I did not know, at the time, what I have since learnt, and which, if true, renders the circumstance still more singular—I mean, that some deaf and dumb persons have been actually restored to the senses of hearing and speaking, by the power of galvanism. This is said to have taken place in some part of Germany, I believe at Vienna; but I only give it as a report.

At the second meeting, I saw *Massien* taught, also for the first time, *stenography*, or the art of short-hand writing. After the common principles had been laid down by the written instructions of the master appointed to give him this lesson, the abbé Sicard desired Massien to define the art which had just been explained to him. He immediately wrote for answer, expressing the greatest joy in his countenance, "C'est l'art d'écrire aussi vite que la parole. La sténographie va comme le cerf ou le cheval, mais l'écriture ordinaire comme le bœuf*." Through

* It is the art of writing as quick as speech. Stenography moves like the deer or the horse, but common writing like the ox.

the whole of the lesson, he displayed the utmost clearness of idea, and the greatest facility of receiving instruction.

Before I left the house of the sourd muets, I visited the boy called the savage of Aveyron. But the subject is sufficiently interesting to deserve a separate letter; I shall, therefore, for the present, take my leave, and will devote my next to the description of this child.

I am, &c.

LETTER XIII.

The young savage, or wild boy of Aveyron.—His history.—The state in which he was found, and the means used to restore him to the use of his senses.—The success with which these efforts have been attended.

Paris, january the 17th, 1801 (27 nivose.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I RESUME in this letter the subject promised in my last.

The child, so well known in Europe by the name of "le jeune sauvage d'Aveyron," or "the young savage of Aveyron," was found in the wood of that name, at the age of eleven or twelve years, by three huntsmen, who some time before had seen the same boy at a distance. He was looking for acorns and roots, which constituted his principal food, when they perceived him; and, at the moment of being seized, he attempted to get away, by climbing up an adjoining tree. He was taken into a cottage; but, at the end of a week, he made his escape from the woman, to whose care he was intrusted, and fled to the mountains. Here he wandered about, exposed to the severest cold of winter, with no covering but a ragged shirt, hiding himself at night in the most solitary places, and in the day approaching the neighbouring villages. After leading, for

some time, this vagabond life, he came, of his own accord, into an inhabited house, situate in the *canton* of *St. Sernain.* Here he was seized, watched and taken care of for three days, and was then removed, first to the hospital of *St. Afrique*, and afterwards to that of *Rhodes*, where he was kept several months. At each of these places, where, of course, he was the subject of much interesting observation, he was found wild, and impatient of control. He was in constant motion, and at every instant seemed to seek an opportunity of escaping. By order of the minister of the interiour, he was brought to Paris, at the end of the 8th year of the republic (about two years ago), under the care of a poor, but respectable, old man, who became so attached to him on the journey, that he shed tears at parting with him, and in going away declared, that if he ever should be deserted, he would adopt him as his child.

The physician Pinel, to whose inspection the boy was first submitted, reported, that the organs of sense in this unfortunate child were reduced, from the want of use, to such a state of debility, that, in this respect, he was inferiour to several domestic animals. His eyes, without fixing themselves, and without expression, wandered wildly from one object to another, incapable of distinguishing the nearest from the most distant objects. His organ of hearing was alike insensible of

the loudest noise, or the softest harmony. The power of the voice was lowered to such a degree, that he could only make an uniform and guttural sound. The sense of smelling was so little exercised, that he received, with the same indifference, the odour of the choicest perfumes, or the nauseous stench of the filthy couch on which he lay. To conclude, the sense of touching was confined to the mere mechanical functions of taking hold of bodies.

In respect to his intellectual powers, the same physician stated him to be incapable of attention (excepting as to the objects of his immediate wants), and consequently incapable also of all those operations which are created by attention. Destitute of memory, of judgment, and of the power of imagination, and so limited, even in the ideas relative to his wants, that he had not yet learnt to open a door, or to get upon a chair, in order to reach those objects of food which were held above his grasp. In fact, destitute of every means of communication, having neither expression nor intention in the motions of his body, passing suddenly, and without any presumable cause, from the gloom of apathy, to the most immoderate fits of laughter. Insensible of every kind of moral affection, his discernment was but a calculation of gluttony; his pleasure, an agreeable sensation of the organs of taste; his sense, an aptitude to produce some incoherent ideas

relative to his wants—in one word, all his existence seemed purely animal.

M. Pinel afterwards compared "le sauvage d'Aveyron" with children born, or become, irrevocably idiots; and he was inclined to conclude, that this unhappy child, doomed to an incurable evil, was not susceptible either of sociability or instruction; but he expressed this opinion with considerable doubt.

Dr. Itard, physician to the national institution *des sourd muets*, from whose interesting little pamphlet I have taken this account, though struck with the fidelity of the picture drawn by Dr. Pinel, and the justice of his remarks, was unwilling to accede to the unfavourable conclusion with which he had closed his report. Founding his hopes, first on the doubtful cause of his supposed idiotism, and next on the possibility of the cure, he humanely determined to make the education of this deserted child his particular study. This education, or moral treatment, he began, on the general principles laid down by doctors Willis and Crichton, and by professor Pinel himself, though he could not appeal to any particular precepts, as no such case had been foreseen in their works. He conceived, that he had five principal objects to effect.

1st. To attach him to social life, in rendering that life more agreeable than the one which he

now led, and particularly by making it more analogous to the life which he had lately quitted.

2dly. To revive the sensibility of his nerves by the most poignant stimulants, and sometimes by exciting the liveliest affections of the mind.

3dly. To extend the sphere of his ideas, by giving him new wants, and by increasing his connection with surrounding objects.

4thly. To lead him to the use of speech, by dragging into use the power of imitation by the imperious law of necessity.

5thly. To exercise, during some time, on the objects of his physical wants, the most simple operations of his mind, and thence to lead it to objects of instruction.

Dr. Itard then fully explains the methods which he took towards these important objects, in which, by incessant care, humane treatment, and the assistance of madame Guerin (the female to whose protection, as a nurse, the child was intrusted), he has so far succeeded, that he no longer entertains any doubt of his ultimate success. It is impossible for me, within the compass of a letter, to enter into the details given on this subject. I shall therefore content myself with translating the observations, with which Dr. Itard concludes the account.

"It may be safely concluded," says he, "from my observations, that the child, known by the name of the savage of Aveyron, is gifted with the free exercise

of all his senses; that he gives continual proofs of attention, recollection, and memory; that he can compare, discern, and judge—in one word, that he can apply all the faculties of his understanding to objects relative to his instruction. It is necessary to remark, as an essential point, that these happy changes have taken place in the short space of nine months, and that too in a subject, who was thought incapable of attention. Hence we may fairly conclude, that his education is possible, if it be not already certain, from the success already obtained, independently of that which may naturally be expected from the assistance of time, which, in its constant unvarying course, seems to give to infancy all that strength and power of unfolding itself, which it takes from man in the decline of life."

I ought, perhaps, to mention, that this unfortunate child, to whom the name of "Victor" has been given, because he listened easily to the sounds which formed that name, has already pronounced the word "lait," *milk*; that he has learnt to put the letters together which compose that word; and that he regularly does so, when he wishes to drink, taking also in his hand a little cup to receive his favourite beverage. Dr. Itard assured me, that he entertained no doubt of his ultimately speaking.

He is warm, passionate, grateful, and he has already given strong proofs of his attachment to

his nurse, madame Guerin. His person is not very remarkable, but his countenance is mild. His face has been cut in several places. He cannot yet use any two senses at the same time; and, to enable him to hear, it is necessary to bind his eyes. When he is angry, he makes a noise like the growling of a dog. He is now dressed like another boy; but I am told, it was long before they could persuade him to bear the restraint of clothing. I remarked, that while we were in the room, he kept his eye constantly on the door, and that the desire of escaping has not yet abandoned him.

To conclude, it seems that he has a mark in his neck, which proves, almost to a certainty, that his life was attempted in his infancy. The hapless offspring of illicit love, he was probably first wounded by the trembling hand of an unnatural mother; and then, under the supposition of being dead, thrown into the wood, where he so long wandered, and was at last discovered.

If you feel as much interested as I do on this subject, you will easily pardon the prolixity of my letter. I only regret, that I cannot send you a more perfect account.

I am, &c.

LETTER XIV.

Detailed account of all the theatres or *spectacles.*

Paris, january 21st, 1802 (1 Pluviôse).

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU have, doubtless, been surprised, that I have not in any of my letters spoken of theatres, or *spectacles* as they are called at Paris. I purposely omitted doing so, till I had had an opportunity of seeing the greater part of those which are now in vogue, that I might place them all before you at one view.

"Le théâtre françois de la république," formerly called, "le théâtre du roi," situate in la rue de la Loi, ci-devant de Richelieu, deservedly takes the lead. It is here, where the tragedies of Racine, Corneille, and Voltaire, are constantly acted; and where also the best comedies on the french stage are represented. The most celebrated performers in the tragic line are, Talma, and la Fond, among the men; and madame Pettit, (otherwise called, mademoiselle Vanhove,) mademoiselle Volney, and mademoiselle Burgoing, among the women. Talma and la Fond have each their admirers, and it is a disputed matter in society to which the palm is due. The same thing may be said of the actresses. In some

circles, madame Pettit is commended as a performer of very extraordinary talents, highly superiour to her competitors; in others, mademoiselle Volney is the favourite; and lately, mademoiselle Burgoing has disputed the victory with both. It is presumptuous perhaps, in a foreigner, to form a judgment on a subject on which natives are divided. I shall only say, that to my english ear, the roaring declamation, common to all the french tragedians, is dreadfully offensive. I must add, that I have more than once mistaken the violence of their action for bombast, and the perpetual motion of their features for grimace. After making this candid avowal, I do not deserve or expect any credit for the judgment I am about to pronounce. I think Talma less bad than la Fond; but such is the difference of national taste, that I am sure neither of them would be suffered on an english stage. I entertain the same opinion of madame Pettit, and mademoiselle Volney, though the latter is to my mind, infinitely superiour to the former. As to mademoiselle Burgoing, she has the great merit of being natural; and it is for this reason, I suppose, that in several of the newspapers here, she is accused of being cold and insipid. I saw her perform "Zaire" a few evenings since, and I never remember to have been more amused. She is a beautiful young girl of sixteen, with a fine expressive countenance, and an elegant

graceful figure. Her voice is clear and articulate; her manner simple and unaffected; and her representation of the different passions, strong and impressive, without "outstepping the modesty of nature." Her dress was elegantly simple, and her deportment truly correct. After the play, "Zaire" was called for again and again, (this is the highest compliment which can be paid to a performer at Paris) and it was long before she could be persuaded to appear. At length the curtain drew up, and Talma led her, "still unwilling," towards the audience. She seemed really distressed, by the thunder of applause which greeted her, and she ran off the stage, as soon as respect to the company would permit.

If mademoiselle Burgoing has the good sense to remember, that this early praise can only be secured by incessant study; and if she has the courage to disregard the ridiculous criticisms of the french journals, (in which she is daily recommended to use more action, to speak in a louder tone of voice, &c. in short, to lay aside the happy *naturel*, which constitutes her merit) it is highly probable, that in a few years she may become the first tragic actress of Europe.

If, generally speaking, I am not pleased with the french tragedians, I entertain a very different opinion as to their comic actors. In this line, I conceive their stage is very superiour to ours. The celebrated mademoiselle Contat, who, for

so many years, has been the delight of the public, is still here. She retains all her powers of acting, and much of her beauty. Molé is as admirable as ever; and Dezencourt and Dugazon, in their different lines, cannot be rivalled. Fleury too, is incomparable; and whoever has seen him act Frederic the 2d, in " Les deux Pages," has seen the most perfect performance, which any stage ever presented. Mesdemoiselles Mezeray, and Mars (cadette), are also excellent actresses; and St. Fal, in many parts, deserves to be considered as a very respectable actor.

In the " Philosophe marié," in the " Vieux Célibataire," and many other comedies, and in the farces of " Les deux Pages," and of " le Circle," (in which most of these eminent actors perform), I have sometimes forgotten, that I was at the play, and believed I saw before me, the characters which they represented. In the " Abbé l'Epée," (which has been so well translated into english) " Morvel" deservedly obtains great applause, for the excellent and natural manner, in which he represents the philanthropic abbé. How interesting is this play! those who have seen, as I have done, the " *institution des sourd muets,*" view it with double pleasure. The whole appears like a real scene, and the abbé Sicard has so admirably followed the example of his humane predecessor, that the soul of the latter seems revived in the former; and in seeing the

play, we forget that l'abbé l'Epée no longer exists.

The *théâtre françois*, though a very large building, is always full, when the good actors perform. You will be surprised, perhaps, when I add, that I have not found "Molière's" plays act as well as I expected. I was present a few evenings ago at the representation of "Tartuffe," and though all the parts were admirably cast, I was heartily tired before the curtain had dropped. I have more than once heard the audience hiss some of his farces, believing them to be modern ones; and to say the truth, they are not on the stage, what they appear in the closet. I cannot determine, whether the change of manners, which has taken place, makes us no longer relish a satire on follies, which exist no more; whether the metre in which these plays are written, fatigues the ear, or that the broad fun which they are intended to produce, is too coarse for modern taste. It may arise indeed, from that taste being vitiated, for Voltaire said, long ago,

"Vous parlez de Molière, oh son regne est passé,
"Le siècle est bien plus fin, notre scène épurée,
"Du vrai beau qu'on cherchoit est enfin décorée*.

* You speak of *Molière!* Oh! his reign is past; our age is much more refined in its ideas; our stage, cleared of such trash, is at last adorned with the really beautiful, which was so long sought for in vain.

Without pretending to decide, whether my judgment be bad or good, I can only say, that I have never yet been entertained with the performance of one of Molière's plays; and if I may judge from the thinness of the house, in some cases, and the unusual noise of it in others, the parisians are of my opinion. Even the "Bourgeois gentilhomme" is obliged to borrow the assistance of a dance; and with this aid, brings but an indifferent audience.

To conclude my account of "le théâtre françois," I ought to say something of the company, and of their accommodations. All the *spectacles* here lose much of their effect, from the undress, in which it is the fashion to frequent the play houses, excepting on a first representation of a new piece, when the ladies make it a point to appear "en grand costume." On common occasions, hats or morning caps, shawls and coloured gowns, are the toilet of the ladies; and boots, round hats, and great coats, that of the gentlemen. Wax candles are not used at all; and one solitary lustre of (what we call in England) patent lamps, suffices for the whole building: this throws a dim and melancholy light on the countenances of the audience, and on the appearance of the house in general. Nothing, indeed, can be less lively, than a french theatre. "La gallerie," which is of course filled with inferiour company, occupies that part of the build-

ing, which in England forms the front and side boxes, and the boxes below are behind the gallery. "Les premières" are immediately above these, answering in height to our green boxes; but they are considered as the principal seats, and are accordingly the dearest.

There are three tiers of boxes above, which, under the respective names of 2me, 3me, 4me, and 5me, diminish in price, in proportion as you ascend. A box may be engaged before hand, by taking all the places, which vary in number, from three to eight; and when this is done, no person whatever has the right of coming there, without the permission of those by whom it is hired; and it is not necessary, as in London, to come before the conclusion of the first act. The box, for the whole of the evening, is private property. It is but justice to add, that if the french theatres are less gay than the english, they are infinitely more orderly; and I never remember to have seen any thing like a dispute, or riot at any of the *spectacles*. Women, too, of a certain description, do not ply for custom, (with the single exception of one theatre, which I shall afterwards name) as at Covent Garden, and Drury Lane, and indeed are rarely seen at the larger play-houses. The price of each ticket in the first places, is six livres, twelve sous, answering exactly to five shillings and sixpence of our money. The stage box, ornamented with scarlet cloth, richly em-

broidered, is reserved for the family of the first consul; but he generally occupies a little *loge grillé*, or shaded box, in which he cannot be seen, immediately under the larger one, in which madame Bonaparte often sits.

The next theatre which I shall mention is, "the opera," or "le théâtre de la république, et des arts," by which latter name it is daily advertised, but never called.

An englishman just arrived at Paris, will be much disappointed, if, in going to the opera, he expects to find that blaze of beauty, that striking *coup d'œil*, and that brilliant assemblage of rank and fashion, to which he has been accustomed in the Hay market. A connoisseur, and "lover of soft sounds," will turn away with equal disgust from a performance, in which the miserable rant of french composition takes the place of the best italian music. But to those, who are contented with splendid exhibition, graceful attitude, and extraordinary agility, this theatre affords an amusement decidedly unequalled. The *ballets*, in this respect, deserve all their celebrity; and the opera, in addition to the best figurantes in Europe, and the most striking decorations, has to boast some very superiour dancers, without counting either Vestris, Dehayes, or mademoiselle Chamroi, of whom I shall probably have occasion to speak hereafter; but who, though engaged, have not yet appeared this season. The most

distinguished dancer at present is mademoiselle Clotilde, an almost gigantic beauty, who, to great strength and extraordinary height, unites much grace, agility, and knowledge of her profession. Her person is well made, her figure commanding, and her countenance expressive. Next to her in reputation is madame Gardel, who is deservedly a great favourite with the parisian public; and madame Vestris, madame Chevigney, and several others, are always received with considerable applause. If the french *ballet* has a decided advantage over the english, it arises from the great art and neatness, with which they contrive to fill the stage. It is not an unusual thing, to see in processions or dances, which require the pomp of show, two hundred persons assembled at a time, all of whom are so admirably drilled, that the whole proceeds with the utmost regularity. *Laïs* is the only singer, who enjoys any thing like popularity; and judges of music assure me, that his voice is uncommonly good.

As to the audience, I have only to refer you to the remarks which I have already made about "le théâtre françois." It is the fashion to be, if possible, less dressed at the opera, than at any other *spectacle*; and the boxes (very few of which are hired by the year) are exactly on the same footing as those of the french theatre. The price is something dearer.

The lighting is equally defective; in short,

the whole amusement consists in the dancing; which, notwithstanding the extraordinary degree of perfection, to which it is carried, does not, in my mind, sufficiently repay you for the *ennui* of hearing the hoarse screaming of execrable singers, and for the fatigue of being three or four hours locked up in a hot and gloomy theatre. I never visit this house, without feeling the truth of lord Chesterfield's remark, who well observed, that, in going to the opera, he always left his understanding at the door, with his half-guinea. I cannot help taking this opportunity, of mentioning a singular *trait* in the french character. Notwithstanding the levity of which, they are, perhaps, not unjustly accused; and notwithstanding their passion for talking, which I fancy is also indisputable, the most solemn silence prevails at their *spectacles;* and if an individual, during the longest and dullest performance, ventures to speak, though in a whisper, he is instantly called to order. I am afraid that the theatre in the Hay market would soon lose half its subscribers, if such a rule were to be enforced in London, though a Banti, or even a Billington were the occasion of it. The stage box of this theatre, also ornamented and embroidered, is kept for the use of the first consul.

After "le théâtre françois de la république," and "the opera," the most esteemed is "le théâtre comique rue Feydeau." The building is elegant,

and though smaller than the other two, yet sufficiently spacious. It is of a circular form, supported by Corinthian pillars, and prettily decorated. It is here, where are performed comic operas, and little pieces, in which are blended dialogue and music. The singers are very good, and the actors respectable. "Le Caliph de Bagdad," "a Maison à vendre," and "la Folie," are the performances, which have attracted the greatest crowds this winter. Mademoiselle Phyllis is the principal performer. She is a very pretty woman, with an excellent voice, and an elegant person.

"Feydeau," as it is commonly called, is much frequented by the fashionables of Paris, and is by many preferred even to the larger theatres. "Vaudeville" is an extremely pretty little theatre, where short lively pieces are acted, enlivened with songs, all of which have an epigrammatic turn. Celebrated authors, distinguished public characters, and temporary occurrences, are often the subjects of these pieces. The philosopher of "Ferney," is well represented in one of these called, "Voltaire," as are, "Florian," "Gesner," "Scarron," &c. in the pieces called, by their respective names. When lord Cornwallis honoured this little theatre with his presence, couplets were instantly sung in celebration of the peace; and a farce has lately been acted here, called, "le Peintre françois à Londres," in which a very handsome compliment is paid to the english

character. Madame Henry is the heroine of "Vaudéville." She is a good actress, and one of the most beautiful women I have yet seen in France.

"Le théâtre de Louvois," is larger than "Vaudeville;" but smaller than "Feydeau." Here plays are acted mostly of two or three acts; but they sometimes perform longer pieces. I saw at this house, a few nights since, a comedy taken from Fielding's Tom Jones. It was a sentimental drama, and neither ill written, nor ill acted; but the ridiculous use of the following expression, "Tom, mon cher Tom*," in the midst of a very pathetic scene, had such an effect on my muscles, that I could not recover my gravity for the rest of the evening. Apropos; the french have a most extraordinary aptitude, to make mistakes in translating, and adopting our english appellations. In a serious drama, or in a novel taken from our language, the vulgarism of addressing a young lady, by the name of, "miss," is retained in french; and the absurd manner in which the word is pronounced, united to the coarse familiarity of the expression, often destroys the effect of the best imagined passages. In the same manner, "Mrs." instead of being translated "madame," is written "mistriss;" and if "a lord William," or a "lord Charles" is mentioned, he

* "Tom, my dear Tom."

is sure to be called in the next page, " le chevalier baronet," &c. A respectable old steward receives the childish name of " Dick," a heroine is " miss Peggy," and a renowned warrior, " sir Jack," or " admiral Billy." I resume my subject. The actors of " Louvois," are tolerably good; the house is about the size of our little theatre in the Hay market, and the pieces represented here are often entertaining.

" Le théâtre de la rue Favart," to which " l'opera Buffa," or the italian opera has lately removed from " la salle olympique," is a handsome building, the boxes of which are so far more lively than those of the other theatres, that they are open. In most of the play-houses at Paris, the boxes are separated by a partition on each side, like the division of the private ones in London. This is not done at " Favart," and the effect is favourable to the appearance of the theatre; the company not being concealed from view, as at the other " spectacles." Madame Bolla has lately made her appearance on this stage, and has excited a considerable degree of public curiosity. She is generally much admired; and when her name is announced, the house is sure to be full. The music is excellent, the orchestra is well chosen, and some of the actors are uncommonly good. The " opera Buffa" is particularly patronized by madame Bonaparte, who has a box here, and seldom fails to attend, when any favourite

piece is performed. The first consul is likewise said to be partial to this house.

Besides the six principal theatres, which I have already enumerated, and which are not only the most frequented, but also the most central, being all situate in, or near "la rue de la Loi;" there are several others scattered about the town, which are full every night. The buildings of many of them are pretty, and the acting far from indifferent.

The "théâtre de Montausier," in the Palais royal, is devoted to little farces, and to that sort of comedy, which rather forces an involuntary laugh, than claims a smile of serious approbation. The blunders of a clownish servant, the tricks of *Scapin*, or the caricature of some reigning fashion, and now and then a sentimental piece of one act, (for "sentiment" is the order of the day, at Paris) constitute the kind of amusement, usually offered at this house. At this theatre are lobbies, or *foyers* as they are called, in which the ladies of the "Palais royal" roam at large, as at Covent-garden and Drury-lane. On this account, "Montausier" is not much frequented by women of character; though now and then it is the fashion, even for the first females of the place, to make parties, and go there.

"Le théâtre de Molière," as it was called, till last week, when it assumed, I know not why, the name of "théâtre National et Etranger," is si-

tuate in "la rue St. Denys." It is a very elegant little theatre, and the backs of the boxes are covered with glass, by which means the audience are reflected, and doubled on every side. I saw here, a few evenings since, "le Lovelace Anglois, ou la Jeunesse de Richelieu," an excellent comedy, which, to my great surprise, was very well performed by the actors of this house.

"L'Ambigu-comique," at the most distant part of the Boulevard, not far from the ci-devant Bastille, is much frequented, on account of its splendid processions. A piece called, "le Jugement de Solomon," has been so extremely popular, as to render it very difficult to get a seat, when it was performed. After several fruitless attempts, I succeeded last night in gaining admittance; and I must confess, that I was much disappointed. The theatre is little and dirty; and the stage is too confined for the shows presented on it, to produce any effect. "Le Jugement de Solomon," notwithstanding its great celebrity, seemed to me a very tiresome, dull, uninteresting piece of tawdry parade.

"Le theâtre des jeunes Artistes," is also on the Boulevard, very near "l'Ambigu-comique." "La salle," or the hall, appropriated to the purpose, though small, is neat and prettily decorated. Here I saw a pantomime in five acts; the hero of which was the renowned "Puss in Boots," or "le Chat botté," as he is called by the french.

Need I add, that I was completely *ennuyé*. The actors are really young beginners, or "jeunes artistes;" and I fear, from the *promising* appearance of three or four of the female performers, (none of whose ages exceeded sixteen) that this theatre is a nursery for other places, besides the play-houses.

"Le théâtre du Marais" I have not yet visited; but I am told, that the building is elegant. A detachment from the company, which I have already mentioned as acting at "le théâtre de Molière," performs at this house.

There are likewise, "le théâtre de la Gaieté, rue Thionville," "le théâtre des jeunes Elèves," et "le théâtre sans Pretension," on the Boulevard. I have not seen them; but I hear they are exactly on the same plan, and in the same state as "le théâtre de l'Ambigu-comique."

Besides these numerous play-houses, there are several exhibitions of horsemanship, on the plan of Astley; and there is likewise a very curious optical deception, called, "la Phantasmagorie de Robertson." The latter is very well worth seeing. After viewing in the outward room various electrical machines, mechanical inventions, and other curiosities, you are led into a dark apartment, in which the ghosts of distinguished characters are supposed to appear. This is extremely well managed; and the principle of optical deceptions is exemplified, and clearly explained. A man of

the name of *Fitzjames* also appears as a ventriloquist; and after he has thrown his voice into different parts of the room, he declares, that the power of doing so is not a natural gift, but simply a habit acquired, of varying the sound of the voice. The same man gives a most admirable imitation of the meeting of a jacobinical club; and in hearing him, you really imagine, that the demagogues of those bloody days are still haranguing with all the absurdity and madness, which characterised them. In addition to the amusements which I have specified, there are innumerable puppet-shows, *théâtres de société*, mountebanks, tumblers, fights of wild beasts, jugglers, rope-dancers, and quack doctors.

Having given you this general sketch of the *spectacles* of Paris, I shall, in my future letters, only mention such particular performances, as by their merit or their popularity, may deserve your attention.

I am, &c.

LETTER XV.

The play of *Henry* IV, read by le Texier.

Paris, february 10, 1802. (21 pluviôse).

MY DEAR SIR,

I WENT this evening to hear *le Texier*, so well known in London, read *la Partie de Chasse* de Henry IV. The reputation of the reader, and the singularity of being present at the recital of a comedy in the french republic; the fame of which formerly depended on the attachment of the people to the cause of monarchy, and particularly to the house of *Bourbon*, drew an unusual crowd, and I had great difficulty in obtaining admittance. " La salle," or hall of " le Brun," in the rue de Clery, in which subscription concerts are usually performed, was the place appropriated to this purpose; and though the room is extremely large, it was soon filled in every corner. The benches were in a few moments occupied, and many persons were obliged to stand during the whole performance. *Le Texier*, to my great astonishment, appeared much confused. Though accustomed, for so many years, to appear before the public, he had all the horrours of a young beginner. I know not, whether his alarms arose from the numerous audience which he saw col-

lected, from any apprehension he might entertain as to an interruption from the police, or from the criticisms which he expected from the french, who, more conversant in the language, in which he was about to read, than those to whom he was used to address himself, might be less indulgent. From whatever cause his fears arose, they were very apparent. His hand trembled, the sweat dropped from his brow, his voice faltered, and in some scenes, he forgot material passages. It is unfair to pass any judgment on a person so circumstanced. I shall therefore only observe, that I saw, with regret, that though much applauded, he was but little admired. As to me, I have often been so highly amused and delighted with his readings in England, that I was more than commonly disappointed.

" La Partie de Chasse de Henry IV" seems to have lost none of its popularity; for, notwithstanding the very imperfect manner in which it was read, the most unbounded applauses testified the approbation of the audience, at the recital of those passages, which were formerly in the mouths of every one. A person unacquainted with Paris, would have been apt to conclude, from what passed this evening, that the french were all royalists. But it must be remembered, that, in the first place, the greater part of those assembled on this occasion, were drawn there by their particular sentiments; secondly, that any thing new, no

matter what, is sure to be well received; and lastly, that Henry the IVth, besides being the favourite of the ladies of all parties, was at the beginning of the revolution considered as a kind of popular character, whom even the most violent democrats held up to public admiration. He was likewise a military hero; and, after all, there is nothing so much esteemed in France, as martial merit. Perhaps it was this part of his character, which induced general Moreau to attend the reading of a play, of which so renowned a warrior was the subject.

This celebrated general sat in the gallery, with a lady of considerable talents, in whose company I afterwards supped. The lady in question entertained the company, with a lively account of the *bon mots*, brilliant thoughts, and happy expressions of her warlike companion; but as *madame* is particularly famed for the richness of her fancy; and as, notwithstanding his decided merit as a soldier, no one ever before heard of the conversation talents of Moreau: it was universally allowed, that the general was not a little indebted for his favourable testimony to the imagination of his fair reporter.

To return to *le Texier*. His play concluded without any interruption; and though the words "vive le roi" were omitted, the song of "vive Henry IV" was repeated and received with enthusiasm, by the audience.

Adieu. How strange a nation are the french! the more I see of them, the more I find it difficult to discover their real sentiments. I am rather inclined to think, that they have no decided political opinions at all; and that their passions, the fashion of the day, or the accidental humour of the moment, make them at one time stern and visionary republicans; then hot headed royalists; and at another, quiet, submissive, unreflecting tools of the ruling power, whatever it may be. But I must not allow myself to enter on such topics: I therefore take my leave, and bid you, for the present,

Adieu,

LETTER XVI.

Party at a *fournisseur's*.—Ball at a *ci-devant* noble's.

Paris, february the 15th, 1802. (25 pluviôse.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED an invitation to spend yesterday evening at the house of an individual, who is supposed to have made a very large fortune as a "fournisseur," or army contractor; and whose wife is one of the "élégantes" of the new set. I send you, therefore, a faithful account, as descriptive of that class of society, to which the name of "les nouveaux riches is given."

A handsome porte cochére* led to a well lighted and elegant stair case, by which we approached the *salon;* where *madame* ——, and some friends who had dined with her, were seated. As, among the very few houses at which I visit at Paris, the greater part are of "l'ancien régime," I have become so accustomed to dark rooms, old furniture, and dismal hangings, that I was quite astonished at the splendour of the apartment, into which I was now ushered. An elegant girandole of cut glass, made with the greatest taste, and filled with innumerable wax

* Every large house in France is approached by a court yard, the gate of which is called "la porte cochére."

lights, gave such a lively appearance to the room, that, for a few moments, I supposed myself in London. The chairs were made with classical propriety in antique shapes, and the colours were well assorted. The carpet (a luxury not often met with in this town) was of the finest Brussels manufactory; and the walls were ornamented with designs on the plan of "Echart." We were received with much politeness by the lady of the house, who is a beautiful woman, and who, whatever her original situation may have been, is at present graceful in her manner, highly accomplished, and well acquainted with the literature of her own country.

Monsieur was neither very handsome, nor particularly brilliant; but he was very civil, and took no little pride in showing us the suite of rooms which adjoined to the *salon*, and which were all, like the latter, splendidly lighted.

The apartment next to that in which we were received, was covered with pictures representing a naval engagement; and the inscription underneath proved, that they had belonged to the unfortunate Louis XVI. A large claw table was placed in the centre of the room; and our host, though a good republican, forgot not to inform us, that it had cost him a large sum of money; having been taken from the Thuilleries, where it had long been in the use of Marie Antoinette. Next to this was the bed-room,

which was particularly splendid. The canopy of India muslin, so fine that it appeared like a net, to which was added a rich embroidery of gold. The stand of this elegant couch was of mahogany, ornamented with antique figures correctly carved. The *boudoir*, which adjoined, almost exceeded in luxury that of madame ****, already described in a former letter. The sofa was of crimson velvet, edged with silver; and the sides and top of this little *bijou* were entirely covered with the finest mirrors. Beyond the *boudoir* was another bed-room, furnished in a different manner, but with equal taste and equal extravagance. The party consisted of five or six ladies, who were, perhaps, more expensively, than correctly dressed, of two of the ministers, and of some foreigners of distinction. A musician of eminence performed on the harpsichord; and accompanied madame **** and one of her friends, who both sung very prettily.

The evening would have been pleasant, had there not been a degree of form, which to me was not a little annoying. About twelve o'clock supper was announced; which was served on the ground floor, in a small *salle à manger*, which was also elegantly furnished. The supper was good, and the servants who waited were attentive.

I saw, this evening, for the first time, general Berthier. He is a little man, plainly dressed,

with cropped hair. His countenance is expressive, when he speaks; but his figure is diminutive, and his appearance by no means military. He is extremely polite, gentlemanly, and affable. I am told, he is by birth "*gentil homme;*" and by his manner it is easy to see, that he must have passed the early part of his life in good company.

After giving you this account of a party at one of the new houses, you will, perhaps, not be displeased, if I conclude my letter with a short description of a ball given by a person, formerly of very high rank, and still of considerable fortune.

The antichamber, through which it is always necessary to pass at a french assembly, is rather a disgusting sight. The servants, differently occupied, some playing cards, some sleeping, and others criticising the dress of those who pass by them, do not attempt to rise, and even those of the house seldom give themselves the trouble of moving, at the arrival of their master's guests. If the *valet de chambre* is near, the company are announced; if otherwise, they are allowed to find their way to the apartment of those whom they are visiting. At the ball, of which I am now speaking, in addition to the antichamber devoted to the use I have mentioned, the second drawing room was filled with *filles de chambre*, milliners, and mantuamakers, whom the good

nature of our hostess permitted to sit there, that they might view the dancing, and learn the fashions. I observed, that several of these *soubrettes* did not direct their attention solely to the *female* part of the company.

After passing through these rooms, we found ourselves at last in the *salon*, which was extremely well lighted with patent lamps. These are much used at Paris, and almost generally substituted for wax. The oil used here is less offensive than that which is bought in London; and, when a sufficient number of reflectors are placed about a room (which is not very commonly the case) it becomes very brilliant; but the heat is always oppressive.

The company assembled on this occasion were all of the old *noblesse;* and no *nouveau riche*, no person connected with the government, and very few foreigners, were permitted to contaminate this *quintessence* of "*bonne compagnie.*" I perceived many of those faces which I had remembered in London among the *emigrès* of distinction; and the lady of the house did not forget to enumerate the families of *dukes*, *comtes*, *marquis*, *maréchals*, &c. which formed her society. It is but justice to this class of company, to observe, that the ladies (whether from a natural sense of propriety, from habits contracted during their residence in foreign countries, or from the wish of distinguishing them-

selves from their plebeian fellow citizens, I shall not pretend to enquire) are infinitely more correct in their dress, than those of any other set at Paris. I saw here several elegant women, who were tasteful, without being indecent; and though, perhaps, a hundred persons were assembled (which is considered a very large party in this town) there was only one female present, of whom it could be said, that she was too liberal in the display of her charms; and she was the subject of general conversation, and general censure.

The ball began with two cotillons, or french country dances, which were very gracefully performed by eight gentlemen and ladies, who vied with each other in skill and activity. The rest of the company were seated on benches, which were placed in gradations against the wall. A walse was then played; about fifteen couple stood up; and the gentlemen, placing their arms round the waists of their partners, moved round the room in a circle, while the young men not so employed formed a group, and filled the centre. The air appropriate to this dance is extremely pretty, and the figures of the ladies are seen to great advantage. Yet, notwithstanding the quiet, respectful manner of the parisians, I must still continue of the opinion of Werter; that no modest woman ought to dance the walse, unless her partner be either her husband or her brother.

After a short interval, I perceived a string of young men crowding together, and forming a line. I learnt with surprise, that this was the preparation for an english dance; and that the gentlemen were taking places for their partners. Though gallantry is, I suppose, the cause of this mode of determining precedency, it is extremely dangerous; and the ladies of Paris ought, like our fair country women, to take the trouble of arranging, themselves, so *important* a question. One or two duels have already taken place, this winter, owing to the disputes occasioned by the zeal with which these "*preux chevaliers*" contended for the honours of priority; and the evil will daily increase, if this manner of taking places be continued.

Walses and cotillons succeeded alternately, for the rest of the evening. About two o'clock in the morning, supper was announced. The table, not being large enough to afford seats for all the company, was solely occupied by the ladies. The entertainment consisted of soups, hot dishes, *légumes*, fruit, and pastry; after which, as a remove, two large plates, one of turbot, and one of salmon, made their appearance. These, to an english eye, seemed very singular; but I hear, all good french suppers conclude with fish.

After supper, the ball recommenced, and continued till six in the morning. On summing up the occurrences of the evening, I remarked,

that, though the women were handsome, the company elegant in their dress, and genteel in their manner; though the music was admirable, and the refreshments plentiful and good; yet there was something wanting; I mean that gaiety of heart, and that flow of spirits, which, according to all accounts, the french formerly possessed.

The ladies danced to perfection; but they seemed to do so rather for triumph than amusement; and any stranger, coming suddenly into the room, would have supposed, that he saw before him the *élèves* of the opera house, not the daughters of the proud *noblesse*. Dancing is, indeed, more a science than an entertainment, at Paris; and while those who were engaged seemed to study every step, and to make all their motions by rule, the by-standers looked on, and criticised with the same professional attention. There was little or no conversation: the loud laugh, involuntary tribute of joy, was not heard; nor the innocent prattle of unsuspecting, happy youth. I know not whether this total change of character is to be attributed to the heavy misfortunes which the higher classes have experienced, or to some other cause; but certainly nothing is more obsolete than french vivacity. I have now passed more than three months in Paris; and have not yet seen among its inhabitants*, one instance of

* I speak only of the superior orders. Among the common people, I have remarked some of that liveliness so

unbounded mirth. When it happens to me to be in english, american, or other foreign companies, I am always surprised at the fun and jollity of the persons around me.

Before I conclude my letter, I ought, perhaps, to mention, that I saw, at this party, the celebrated Kosciusco, whose heroic exertions in the cause of polish liberty have rendered him so justly celebrated. I am happy to say, that he is perfectly recovered from his wound, and that he has no longer any marks of lameness. He is not now in the vigour or the bloom of youth; but his eye is finely expressive. I am sure, Lavater, in seeing it, would have said, "That eye is the eye of a poet, a genius, or a patriot." I had not the pleasure of being introduced to him, and can therefore only speak to you of his exterior.

I am, &c.

haunted, as forming a material ingredient in the french character.

LETTER XVII.

A play acted for the first time, called "Edouard en Ecosse," the hero of which was the english pretender, full of royalist sentiments, performed twice, and highly applauded; "God save the King," played on the French stage; plot of the play, which was forbidden on the third day.

Paris, feb. 21, 1802. (2 ventose.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I WENT three evenings ago to see the first representation of a new play, called "Edouard en Ecosse*." The subject was of course the arrival in the isle of Sky of the english pretender, and his escape thence. The applications which were likely to be made to the present situation of France, drew an immense crowd. I went early to "le théâtre françois," and was fortunate enough to obtain a seat. If before the curtain drew up I was struck with the singularity of my situation as a british subject, about to see on the stage of the French Republic a play founded on such a topic, my surprise increased when the performance began. I soon perceived that the whole merit of the piece depended on the interest which an unfortunate prince, banished from the throne of his ancestors, was calculated to produce on the minds of the audience; and if such was the design of the author, he was more than commonly

* Edward in Scotland.

successful. The passages in favour of royalty, and particularly those which expressed pity for the proscribed, were applauded with inexpressible warmth. The dialogue was well written, and so artfully worded, that it was difficult for any man, whatever his political sentiments might be, not to join in commiserating the fate of Edward. The story was simple, and as well as I can trace it from memory, I will give it to you.

The young pretender, after being defeated by his enemies, and abandoned by his friends, takes refuge, disguised as a peasant, in the isle of Sky. Having passed three days without food, he is driven by want into a house, the door of which he finds open. Here exhausted with fatigue and hunger, he falls asleep. In this situation he is discovered by lady Athol, (the mistress of the mansion) wife of the governor of the island, and the particular favourite of king George. He wakes, and, after an interesting dialogue, confesses who he is. He then asks of lady Athol "a little bread for the son of him who once was her sovereign." Long divided between the sentiments of humanity and those of duty and gratitude, lady Athol cannot resist this last pathetic appeal, and having supplied him with some refreshment, she determines to protect him. In the midst of this scene Argyle, who is commissioned by the british government to take the pretender, arrives, and seeing Edward, expresses

some suspicion. To remove this, lady Athol, with that presence of mind which women often possess on such trying occasions, declares, that the person he now sees in the dress of a peasant is her husband, Lord Athol, (whom Argyle had never seen) and who, having been shipwrecked, was just arrived in this pitiful plight. Argyle believes the story, and having paid his compliments to the supposed governor, leaves him to take that repose, of which he concludes he must stand in need, after the accident which he had experienced.

Edward afterwards appears in the dress of lord Athol, and in that character is obliged to preside at a supper, to which Argyle and some other english officers had been previously invited. One of the latter, a violent partisan and rough soldier, proposes, as a toast, " death to all the enemies of George." Edward, after a violent struggle, throws down his glass, and rising from the table, exclaims, " I will not drink to the death of any man."

After this scene which was rendered very interesting to the English, by our " God save the king" being played on the french stage, and to the whole audience by the last phrase, which was received with unbounded applause, the real lord Athol arrives. In this dilemma the courage of lady Athol does not desert her. She makes signs to her husband, who discovers the truth,

and recollecting that Edward had once saved his life at Rome from the hand of an assassin, he determines to rescue him from the danger of his present situation. He accordingly pretends to confess to Argyle, that in assuming the name of Athol, he (Athol) had deceived him, and that he is the pretender, after whom he is seeking. In this character, therefore, Athol is arrested, and in the mean time Edward, conducted by the faithful steward of lady Athol, makes his escape in a boat. The whole then is disclosed, and on the arrival of the duke of Cumberland, Athol is pardoned for this pious fraud, the duke declaring that he is convinced that the king himself, would, under similar circumstances, have acted in the same manner.

There is a kind of counterplot or episode, in which the celebrated miss Murray appears as the sister of Athol, but her character is not material to the general story of the play. Argyle, who is in love with her, asks her of her Edward (while he appears as lord Athol) and this puts him into another dilemma, from which he is also saved by the presence of mind of lady Athol. Mademoiselle Contat played lady Athol most admirably, and the part of Edward was performed in a very interesting and natural manner by *St. Fall*, who rose infinitely above himself in the character assigned him.

From this imperfect account you will at least be able to observe what occasions were given both

in the scenes and in the dialogue, for such applications, as the friends of royalty took care to make, and which were applauded with a degree of ardour, which I never saw equalled either in England or France.

What a strange people are the French? Do I see the same nation who put Louis XVI to death, and who have, with such daring courage, opposed the return of the house of Bourbon, shed tears at a similar story, and enthusiastically support the sentiments of this play, founded not only on an attachment to monarchy, but on principles of indefeasible right? Again, do I see the same people, who a few years back permitted their best and worthiest citizens, however guiltless, to fall in crowds under the axe of the guillotine, and at the nod of a contemptible petty tyrant; I say, do I see the same people commiserate the sufferings of an abdicated prince, and loudly applaud a sentiment which justly declares, that to wish the death of any one is a base, an unmanly, and an unnatural action? But I am going out of my element. I return to the play. It was received with more and more admiration at every line, and when the curtain at last dropped, the applause increased, and continued for several minutes uninterruptedly.

The author was called for, and proved to be one of the actors of the house, who, as if inconsistencies of all kinds were to be reconciled on this occasion, was formerly a violent jacobin.

The play was acted a second night, with the omission of " God save the king," and the sentiment about the toast; and to day it is at last forbidden.

The royalists are excessively irritated at the prohibition, but how was it possible to suffer in a republic a performance, every word of which expressed respect for royalty, and pity for a proscribed family?

In England, where, thank God! liberty is less shackled than in this country, and where our ideas of government are more fixed, should we suffer on our stage a play which recommended republican doctrines? The answer is plain. I believe this is the right way of judging every question. Viewing it in this light, I think, that if the consuls had any fault, it was in suffering " Edward" to be acted. In stopping it they have only done their duty.

I am, &c.

LETTER XVIII.

The *carnival*.—Masks in all the streets.—Account of the different characters, processions, &c.—Masqued ball at the opera house.

Paris, february the 25th, 1802 (6 ventose).

MY DEAR SIR,

THE streets of Paris have, since sunday last, exhibited a very singular appearance to the eye of an englishman. The carnival is now begun; and the people, being permitted by the present government to return to all their old habits, are celebrating this season of the year with that gayety, whim, and eccentricity, which it has long been a kind of religious duty, in catholic countries, to display on such occasions. From six in the morning till midnight, the principal streets are crowded with masks of every description; and while a certain number are contented with exhibiting their fun and their dresses on foot, others are mounted on horses, attended by servants, also in *costume*, and some are seated in carriages of every description. In short, Paris has been one continued scene of jubilee, and it is difficult to pass through the principal avenues of the town, on account of the vast crowds of singular figures, who press forward on every side, and arrest the attention of spectators. Harlequins, columbines,

beaux, abbés, lawyers, and monks, present themselves every where; and while they circulate in detached parties, mamalukes, turks, and indian savages, correctly dressed, well mounted, and attended with bands of music, move in numerous bodies. These, and motley groups of masks of all kinds, filling the inside, top, and every part of hackney coaches, landaus, sociables, curricles, cabriolets, and german waggons, form lengthened processions on the Boulevard, in the rue St. Honoré, and in the neighbourhood of the Palais royal; while the latter, the Thuilleries, and Champs Elysées, are filled with pedestrian and motley coloured wits, who, attacking each other with *poissard* eloquence, amuse not a little the surrounding multitude.

It is difficult to convey an idea of the show, variety, and eccentricity of the dresses. In the extraordinary processions, which I have already mentioned, several handsome carriages were employed, drawn very frequently by four, sometimes by six, and, in more instances than one, by eight horses. Caricatures of all sorts were exhibited; and it was curious to see the *costumes* of friars, nuns, full dressed *marquis*, powdered *abbés*, and mitred prelates, appearing as masquerade disguises in those streets, where, twelve years before, the same dresses excited the serious respect of every one.

The people showed considerable fun in many of the grotesque figures which they assumed;

and I was particularly pleased with a fellow, who, imitating our english print, was dressed as a monk, and literally carried on his back a young girl enclosed in a truss of straw, with these words written on his burden, "Provision pour le convent*." Besides innumerable *Eves*, beautiful *Venuses*, and handsome legged damsels, dressed as boys, *Diana* had many a fair representative, clad in flesh coloured pantaloons, and gracefully perched on the edge of a coach box, embracing with one arm a Hercules, and with the other an Adonis. I think you will admire, as I did, the admirable choice of such a dress, and such a posture, for the goddess of Modesty. The moral conduct of each lady was, doubtless, not less appropriate than her outward appearance to the character which she assumed.

This amusement has already continued some days, and will, I am told, last at least ten more. It is difficult to ascertain how the body of the people, who alone take part in these sports, can support both the loss of time, and the expense which the dresses, carriages, &c. must necessarily occasion. It is indeed reported, that the government pays the whole cost, and that the principal characters are hired to amuse the mob; but a respectable gentleman, who was intimately connected with the minister of police under the old

* Provision for the convent.

régime, assures me, that the same thing was said at that time; and that nothing was more false, though the masks were then as splendid and as numerous as they are at present. I believe, the truth is simply this, that the french are so fond of pleasure, of amusement, and *spectacle* of all kinds, that there is no sacrifice which they will not endure, in order to be able to indulge this favourite passion. A parisian will dine for six days on a sallad, that he may go on the seventh to a ball or a play; and I have no doubt that the emperors, caliphs, and janissaries, whom I have seen to day in such oriental splendour, have many of them still, like good christians, begun to mortify the flesh, even before the commencement of Lent. This necessary sobriety, united to the regulations of the police, which are admirable, prevents any disorder or riots in the streets; and notwithstanding the swarms of idle masqueraders, who wander at present about this great city, I have not yet heard of a single accident, or of the slightest disturbance.

The carnival is celebrated in the same manner by the higher classes in the evening; and there is a masquerade every night at the opera house. I went there yesterday, and observed more gaiety among the persons assembled, than I have yet seen in France. The pit being joined to the stage, gave a large space, which was entirely filled. The gentlemen do not usually wear masks, and

their persons are only covered with a domino. It is one of the privileges of the ladies to conceal their faces, and to attack, without being known, the *beaux* of their acquaintance. This custom takes from the splendour of the masquerade, as very few persons are fancifully dressed, and almost all are occupied in seeking adventures. Nor was the conversation livelier than on such occasions in England: the small number of individuals who pretended to assume characters, trusted to their dresses, rather than their wit, for the support of their parts. There were "english jockies," who had never heard of Newmarket, and who could speak no language but the french; haughty dons, who could not answer a question in spanish; actors, who could not repeat a single line either of Racine, Corneille, or Voltaire; boys of Egypt, who knew not the course of the Nile; grand signors, who heard, for the first time, that wine was forbidden by the Koran; and monks, who did not know to what order they belonged. Yet, notwithstanding these little defects, the evening was lively; and though there was no form, there was no disturbance.

Whatever improprieties might have privately taken place, no indecency shocked the public eye; no drunken persons made their appearance; no woman was insulted, and no quiet inoffensive man dragged into a quarrel.

This is, indeed, the great and striking characteristic of a public place in France, that it may be visited in safety; and if the parisian *spectacles* are less amusing than those of London, the former have, at least, the negative merit of not exposing those who frequent them to riot, rudeness, or inconvenience.

I am, &c.

LETTER XIX.

Bonaparte's audience.—His address to the english gentlemen presented to him.—First appearance, this season, of *Vestris*.—Madame de St——l's concert.

Paris, march the 7th, 1802 (16 ventose.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I SPENT yesterday a very busy and a very entertaining day. On the 15th of every month, the first consul, after the review (the ceremony of which I have described in a former letter), gives audience to the ambassadors and foreigners, in other words, holds his court. As I was very anxious to have an opportunity of seeing, in a private room, and of speaking to Bonaparte, who, whatever his political merits or faults may be, is indisputably one of the most extraordinary men whom the world ever produced, I requested Mr. Jackson, the british minister, to do me the favour of presenting me. My name having accordingly been sent in to the minister for foreign affairs, I drove to the palace of the Thuilleries, at three o'clock, where, in a small apartment on the ground floor, called "la Salle des Ambassadeurs," the foreign ministers, and their respective countrymen, wait till the first consul is ready to receive them. Chocolate, lemonade, sherbet, and liqueurs, were served round in abundance;

and, after an interval of nearly an hour, the doors were thrown open, and we ascended the great stairs of the palace, which were lined with grenadiers, who stood with rested arms on every step. In the antichamber there was an officer's guard, which saluted us in passing; and after going through four or five very large rooms, in each of which there was on both sides a file of soldiers, we, at last, found ourselves in what would be called, in England, the presence chamber. Here, in a splendid *salon*, stood Bonaparte, between Cambacères, the second consul, and le Brun, the third. They were all three dressed in their grand *costume* of scarlet velvet, richly embroidered with gold. The generals, senators, and counsellors of state, who surrounded Bonaparte, retired on our arrival, and a circle was instantly formed, the foreigners of different nations ranging themselves behind their respective ministers. The imperial ambassador stood on the right hand side of the first consul; next to him was placed Mr. Jackson; and on the left I perceived *count Luchesini*, the prussian minister, and the hereditary prince of Orange, whom he presented this day. In compliment to the latter, Bonaparte, contrary to his usual practice, began the audience on that side. He spoke for some time to the son of the deposed Stadtholder, and seemed anxious to render his situation (awkward and extraordinary as it was) as little painful

as possible; but I thought I could remark, in the countenance of this respectable young man, a look which proved that these efforts, though well meant, were ineffectual. In passing by each foreign minister, the first consul received the individuals of their respective nations with great ease and dignity. When it came to Mr. Jackson's turn, sixteen english were presented; and, after Bonaparte had spoke to five or six of us, he said, with a smile, which is peculiarly his own, and which changes a countenance, usually stern, into one of great mildness, "Je suis charmé de voir tant des anglois ici. J' espére que notre union sera de longue durée. Nous sommes les deux nations les plus puissantes et les plus civilizées de l'Europe. Il faut nous unir pour cultiver les arts, les sciences, les lettres, enfin pour faire le bonheur de l'espèce humaine*."

Mr. Jackson made no reply, and, of course, no one else could say any thing. The first consul spoke to each individual with politeness, and inquired to what regiments those belonged who were presented in uniform. He particularly distinguished colonel Graham, an officer of great merit in our service, who, both in Italy and in

* I am delighted to see here so many english. I hope our union may be of long continuance. We are the two most powerful and most civilized nations of Europe. We should unite to cultivate the arts, the sciences, and letters; in short, to improve the happiness of human nature.

Syria, had been opposed to the arms of France, when commanded in person by Bonaparte. After going round the circle, he spoke a second time to this gentleman, and paid the same compliment to the hereditary prince of Orange. The audience then closed, and we descended with the same ceremonies as in coming in, to "la Salle des Ambassadeurs," where we waited for our carriages.

The whole was conducted with great dignity; and persons used to courts, all agree, that the audience of the first consul is one of the most splendid things of the kind in Europe. The pomp of military parade with which it is attended, the beauty of the palace, the handsome uniforms and commanding figures of the soldiery, the variety of regimentals worn by the officers of different nations, the elegance of taste displayed by some foreigners (for every one not in uniform is in the full dress of the old court), the splendid stars, ribands, and orders of others, and, above all, the celebrity of Bonaparte, unite so many circumstances in its favour, that you will not be surprised at a judgment, which, to a person who has not lately seen Paris, may seem extraordinary. As to the first consul, he is as superiour in little things as in great ones; and, had he been born a sovereign, he could not possibly discharge this part of his duty with more ease, dignity, and decorum. He is also very ready in finding subjects of conversation, and opportunities of civility.

He gave yesterday a proof of this; which, though I did not hear it myself, I shall venture to report on the credit of a person on whom I can rely. A prussian aid-de-camp being presented (whose name I have forgotten), Bonaparte asked, "where his general had last served?" The officer replied, "in the campaign against France."—"I beg you a thousand pardons," rejoined the consul; "but it is so contrary to the usual order of things (*si peu naturel*) to see the prussians and french opposed to each other, that the circumstance had entirely escaped me. *"

Before I conclude my account of the audience, I ought to mention, that it may be well called a *court*; for it is attended not only with all the requisites of show, parade, form, and etiquette, but likewise by that flattery and cringing attention, which it was once the exclusive privilege of royalty to receive. I saw the proudest nobles of foreign courts, decorated with all the trappings of chivalry, humbly bending the body, and anxi-

* When the present worthy and respectable minister from the United States of America (Mr. Livingston) was presented, Bonaparte said to him, "Vous venez d'une république libre et vertueuse dans un monde de corruption."—(You come from a free and virtuous republic into a world of corruption.)—Mr. Livingston, who is rather deaf, and does not perfectly understand french, did not immediately hear him. Bonaparte instantly called to M. Talleyrand, and desired him to explain, in english, what he had said.

ously courting the smile of that individual, whom, a few years, nay, a few months before, they would have branded with the names of rebel, jacobin, and usurper; but the creed of courtiers is to change with "existing circumstances," and those, whose intrigues against Bonaparte were the most active, are now his most obsequious sycophants But a truce to remarks which lead to politics.

The english who were presented immediately after the peace, were asked to dinner; but owing to the greatness, I imagine, of our number, this favour was not yesterday shown to us. I regret much having missed the entertainment, as I am told it was strikingly magnificent.

I went in the evening to see a *spectacle*, infinitely more interesting, according to french ideas, though certainly not so according to mine. I mean, the first appearance, this season, of Vestris, and mademoiselle Chameroi. This was at Paris a matter of great importance, and boxes were engaged for weeks before hand. Mrs. —— was fortunate enough to procure one; and I therefore saw the performance (Hecubé, and "le *Ballet* de Paris,") to great advantage. Vestris has certainly lost none of his merit, and deserves, as well as ever, that celebrity which has long been his; but I could not help being disgusted at the thunder of applause which greeted his appearance. It is impossible, indeed, to carry further the *sublime* art of dancing;

but how contemptible is it to lavish the praises of a great nation on the exertions of mere bodily skill! If, as Dr. Johnson well observes, "the garlands due to the great benefactors of mankind should not be suffered to fade upon the brow of those who can boast only petty services and easy virtues," much less should they ornament the head of him, whose utmost claims on the gratitude of the public are the flexibility of his body, or the grace of his steps.

Mademoiselle Chameroi, the *élève* and favourite of Vestris, danced delightfully, and almost shared the popularity of her protector.

Bonaparte was present, and sat, for the first time, in his state or open box. He was welcomed with warm and universal plaudits; but I blush to add, that they were not greater than those which the "quick-footed" Vestris had already received. Is it possible that the parisians reward, with the same honours, the services of their great statesmen, and the exertions of their favourite dancers?

From the opera I went to a supper and concert, given in honour of the prince of Orange, by the celebrated madame de St——l's. Her house is one of the most agreeable at Paris, and one of the few at which foreigners are received with kindness and hospitality. I have not been fortunate enough to form part of her dinner societies; but I am told, that they well deserve

the credit of affording "the feast of reason, and the flow of wit." Her evening assemblies, at several of which I have been present, are the liveliest and best conducted which I have seen in this town.

The most distinguished public characters, all the foreigners of eminence, and most of the reigning *belles* of Paris, are always met with at her house. Her parties, too, are so admirably managed, that every one does precisely what he wishes; and a stranger is sure to be amused either with excellent music, cards, or, what is better than either, the conversation of the lady of the house.

Adieu. This letter is already so very long, that I shall make no apology for an abrupt conclusion.

I am, &c.

LETTER XX

The antichamber of the *Musée Central*, now filled with an additional collection of fine pictures.—Account of the wonderful recovery of some chef-d'œuvres.—List of pictures in this room.

Paris, march the 20th, 1802 (29 ventose.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I WENT this morning to the picture gallery, (or *Musée Central des Arts*), and was very agreeably surprised at finding that the antichamber, which, on my first arrival at Paris, was filled with a miserable modern exhibition, now contains some of the *chef-d'œuvres* of the first masters.

These pictures, taken from Venice, Florence, Turin, and Foligno, have lately been arranged and deposited in this room. The advertisement to the additional catalogue, published on the occasion, acquaints us, that the persons entrusted with the management of the *Musée*, anxious to increase the pleasure of the public, and the improvement of the arts, had regularly exhibited, as they received them, the pictures collected at Bologna, Cento, Modéna, Parma, Placenza, Rome, Venice, Florence, and Turin. But among the number, there were some in such a state of decay, that it was impossible to place them in the *Louvre*, without incurring the almost certain

danger of their destruction. The administrators, therefore, very wisely determined to take every possible means of rescuing these sublime efforts of the art of painting from that entire ruin, into which they were rapidly falling. Their zeal and their perseverance have been crowned with success, infinitely greater than they could possibly have expected.

By a report made to the *national institute* by *Morveau*, *Vincent*, and *Taunay*, it appears, that the celebrated picture of Raphael, called " la Vierge au Donataire," or the Virgin with the Donor, found at Foligno, was in such a state of decay from the dampness of the place, where it had long been deposited, that the persons employed by the french government, much doubted the possibility of conveying it to Paris. After having taken every precaution, which their experience could suggest, to prevent the danger which they apprehended, they ordered the removal; but they felt, at the same time, that they could not exhibit this masterpiece in France, till they had shifted the ground from the wood on which it was originally painted, and which had become entirely rotten.

" Le Martyre de St. Pierre le Dominican," or the Martyrdom of St. Peter the Dominican, esteemed one of the *chef-d'œuvres* of the art of painting, and the finest work which ever came from the pencil of Titian, was also, when found

in the church of St. John and St. Paul, at Venice, painted on wood, and the pannel uncommonly thick. Its great dimensions obliged the commissioners to order it to be transported by sea to Marseilles. As the frigate, "la Favourite," on board of which it was embarked, met with a storm during the passage, the case which contained it was exposed to the wet, and the humidity found its way to the picture. It was no longer possible to discover its beauties; and the only means left of saving the picture, was, by removing it from the wood, and placing it on cloth. This operation, as well as the former one, rendered, in the latter case, still more difficult, by the extraordinary size of the picture, was performed by C. Hacquin, with wonderful skill, great talent, and singular success. The process, which was superintended by a committee of the *national institute*, is given in the catalogue.

Both these superior specimens of painting are now restored to all their brilliancy, and to all their original perfection; and the principles on which this transposition has been effected, are so simple, that there is no longer any thing to dread from similar accidents.

The preface continues to state, that this new exhibition unites the most esteemed productions of the florentine, venetian, and roman schools. Some from the palace of Pitti, at Florence, and some from Turin. Specimens are presented of

the works of artists unknown in Paris, and perhaps in many parts of Europe. Such are the Hunters, by St. Jean de St. Jean; the Virgin, the infant Jesus, and the infant St. John, by *Lorenzo Sabbatini;* and the *Ecce Homo*, of *Cigoli;* to which is added, a valuable picture of various animals, by J. Weeninix, lately bought by the minister of the interior, at the sale of *Paillet* and *Coclers*, and united to the collection of the *Musée Central*, which, as the catalogue well observes, will become the most magnificent of Europe, if acquisitions are thus made of those productions, which are still wanting to complete it. I shall conclude this account, by mentioning the pictures of the celebrated masters.

PAUL VERONESE.

No. 44. "Les Nôces de Canna," or the Marriage in Cana, by Paul Veroncse, is a large picture, in which he has introduced all the dresses and extraordinary characters of the age in which he lived. It is one of the four *cere*, or feasts, and was exhibited in the refectory of the monks of *St. George the great*, at Venice. The artist received for this interesting picture only 90 ducats, or 675 *livres tournois*.—The second *cœne* is called "le Repas," or the Repast at Simon's, and was in the refectory of the friars of St. Sebastian, at Venice. It is now in the *Musée*.—The third is the Repast at *Levi's*, which forms the number 45 in this collection; and the fourth, in which Paul Veronese paints our Saviour at the Pharisee's,

has long been at Versailles, in the *Salon d'Hercule*, having been given to Lewis XIV. by the republic of Venice. "Ainsi," says the catalogue, in the style of french gasconade, "graces au génie de la Victoire, la publique aura bientôt la jouissance de voir ces quatre magnifique compositions réunis dans le Musée Central *."

No. 45. Is the Repast at Levi's, mentioned above.

46. Is the Virgin, St. Jerom, and other saints.—One of his best pictures, taken from the convent of St. Zacharia, at Venice.

47. The Martyrdom of St. George, taken from the principal altar of the church of St. George, at Venice, esteemed the finest work which Paul Veronese left in his own country. The *Musée* has the same work in little.

48. Jupiter thundering against Crimes. Taken from the ducal palace at Venice, where it was placed in the hall of the council of ten. The crimes described in the picture are, Forgery, Exaction, and Treason, which were the subjects specially entrusted to this dreadful tribunal, whose judgments were without appeal. Paul Veronese executed this work after a journey to Rome. He pretended to have copied, and *connoisseurs* pretend to discover, figures imitated from the antique.

49. Christ carrying his Cross.—This valuable picture, painted on wood, comes from the old collection of the kings of France.

50. The Crucifixion of our Saviour.—This also comes from the royal collection.

* Thus, thanks to the genius of Victory, the public will soon have the pleasure of seeing these four magnificent compositions united in the *Musée Central*, or Central Museum.

No. 51. The Pilgrims of Emmaus, taken from Versailles.

PORDENONE.

No. 54. St. Laurence, Justiniani, and other saints. Taken from the church of *Madona del Orto*, at Venice. Reckoned one of *Pordenone's* best works. His name appears on it, written thus, " Joannes Antoninus Portapanaensis."

RAPHAEL.

No. 55. " La Vierge au Donataire," or the Virgin with the Donor.—I have before mentioned the wonderful manner in which this picture has been recovered.

56. Jesus Christ, the Virgin, St. John, St. Paul, and St. Catherine.—This picture, painted on wood, comes from St. Paolo, at Parma.

57. The Portrait of Raphael and his Fencing-master, taken by himself. Painted on cloth, and brought from Versailles.

58. The Portrait of count *Balthasar Castiglione*. Painted on cloth, and brought from Versailles.

59. The Portrait of *Cardinal Inghirami*. Painted on cloth. Taken from the palace of Pitti, at Florence.

60. Portrait of pope Julius II. Painted on wood. Also from the palace of *Pitti*.

RUBENS.

No. 61. Grotius, Justus Lipsius, Rubens, and his Brother. A picture of the great painter, and his nearest and most illustrious friends.

62. The carrying of the Cross.—This picture, painted on cloth, comes from the abbey of Affingham, near Alost, in Holland.

No. 63. Christ thundering against Heresy. Painted on cloth. Taken from the church of the Jacobins, at Antwerp.

64. The Assumption of the Virgin. Painted on cloth. Taken from the church of the *Carmes des Chaux*, at Brussels.

ANDREA SACCHI.

No. 65. St. Romuald.—This picture comes from the church of the *Camadules* of *St. Romuald*, at Rome, where it was placed above the principal altar. It was long esteemed one of the four best pictures at Rome.

SALVATOR ROSA.

No. 66. The Ghost of Samuel.—This picture, brought from Versailles, is on cloth.

TINTORET.

No. 67. Saint Mark freeing a Slave. From the fraternity of St. Marco, at Venice. One of the best pieces of Tintoret, and one of the three to which he affixed his name, in this manner, "Jacomo Tintor, F."

68. St. Agnes bringing to Life the Son of a Prefect, at Rome. Taken from the church of *la Madona del Orto*, at Venice.

TITIAN.

No. 69. The Martyrdom of St. Peter, the Dominican.—The wonderful recovery of this precious picture I have before mentioned. It is now in high preservation. The colours are rich, and the whole perfect.

No. 70. The Portrait of the *Marquis del Guasto*.—This picture is painted on cloth, and was in the old collection.

71. The Virgin, the infant Jesus, St. John, and St. Agnes. From the old collection.

72. The Holy Family, called the Virgin with the Rabbit. From the old collection.

73. The Pilgrims of Emmaus.—This picture, painted on cloth, was brought from Versailles.

74. Titian and his Mistress.—This valuable picture comes from the old collection.

75. The Picture of a man. From the old collection.

76. The Portrait of Cardinal *Hippolytus de Medici*, in a military dress. From the palace of Pitti.

VAN DYCK.

No. 84. Francis de Moncade, Marquis d'Aytone, on cloth. From the palace of prince Braschi, at Rome.

LEONARDI DA VINCI.

No. 37. The Virgin and St. Ann, on wood. From the old collection.

GUERCINO (GIO FRANCESCO BARBIERI.)

No. 33. St. Petronelle. The chef-d'œuvre of Guerchini. Taken from the pontifical palace, at mount Cavallo, at Rome, where it ornamented the chapel called *Pauline*.

L. CARRACCI.

No. 19. The carrying away the Body of the Virgin.

20. The Apostles at the Sepulchre.—These two pictures came from Placenza, where they were seen in

the cathedral. Painted in 1608, when Carracci was far advanced in life.

" The Transfiguration," by Raphael, is undergoing the same process as the pictures mentioned in the beginning of this letter; and will, probably, when this is finished, obtain all its former celebrity.

I make no apology for this long account; for knowing your curiosity about paintings, and the general taste for subjects in England, I thought it an indispensible duty to give you the full particulars of this new exhibition, which, though on a smaller scale, is perhaps superiour, in point of real merit, to the larger collection.

Adieu. The more I see of the Musée, the more am I delighted. I often take advantage of the hospitable privilege accorded to foreigners, and come here on those days when the public are not admitted. I have then the united advantages of looking on uninterrupted by the noise of crowds, and of seeing the number of artists, of both sexes, (some professional, and some amateurs), who are busily employed in copying the most esteemed productions.

I think it certain, that so favourable an opportunity will soon revive, in all its ancient splendour, the art of painting, which, for some years back, has been, undoubtedly, on the decline.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXI.

Bois de Boulogne.—Account of that promenade.—Order of the police against english footmen wearing laced cocked hats.—Cannon fired in honour of the definitive treaty.—Illuminations in the evening.—Little effect produced at Paris by the peace.

Paris, march the 26th, 1802, (5 germinal).

MY DEAR SIR,

WE have had for some days delightful weather; and the parisians have taken advantage of it in the best manner, by passing several hours in the "*bois de Boulogne,*" which answers in some respects to our Hyde-park. From three till six o'clock, the champs Elisées, through which the road runs, leading to this favourite spot, and all the adjoining streets have been crowded every day during this week, with carriages of all descriptions. Berlins, chariots, curricles, gigs, cabriolets, sociables, &c. These united to innumerable horsemen and pedestrians, make the whole city assume a lively appearance.

The *bois de Boulogne* is about a mile and a half from the *place de la Concorde;* and the avenue and turnpike leading to it, form one of the most striking entrances of Paris. The wood itself was formerly very fine; but in one of the frantic moments of revolutionary violence, great

part of the trees, were, by order of the then government, cut down for fuel. It is however still a very pleasant retreat; and though the wood is not so well garnished as it once was, yet it is singularly retired and romantic, for a spot so near a capital. A gate leads to it, where, from the crowds pressing forwards, it is often necessary to wait before it is possible to pass. A string of carriages fills the centre of the road, on the sides of which, gentlemen and ladies on horseback are obliged to range themselves, as there is no separate space for equestrians. Under the trees, to the right, it is the fashion to walk, or to sit on chairs, which are placed there for the purpose; while ice, oranges, flowers, fruit, and lemonade, are offered by persons, who make it their business to attend, and who are not a little importunate. Here the *belles* of Paris appear in all their *éclat*, not dressed in rustic straw hats, and snow white morning gowns, such as our fair country women wear in Kensington gardens; and which, while they are the emblem of their minds, pure and simple, are the most becoming ornaments they could assume. The ladies of Paris, disdain such humble attractions; and in showy silks, embroidered muslins, pearl necklaces, lace caps, and transparent petticoats, challenge the attention of passengers. "Les pommes d'albâtre," as Voltaire describes them, are as little disguised as at the balls, which I have mentioned;

and ill-nature has a fair opportunity of determining by day light, whether they owe their fairness to nature or to art. Clad in this manner, many of them appear in open carriages, while others lounge on the chairs, or loiter along the walk, followed by their booted *beaux*, who to english leather breeches and boots, and cropped hair, sometimes add a pair of ear rings, or a smart military cocked hat, when the sun shines in all its meridian heat.

The mixture of english and french fashions is, indeed, very curious at Paris; and whenever a frenchman wishes to be completely *à l'anglaise*, he generally contrives to make himself ridiculous. The equestrians sit on the necks of their horses, and turn out their toes, by way of imitating our manner of riding; and the grooms who attend them, whom they call "des jockés," are dressed like our postilions; that is to say, in short waistcoats, richly laced with gold and silver, with a cap, ornamented in the same manner, and without any coat. The horses, generally speaking, are very bad, very ill trimmed, and worse managed. There are some handsome english carriages already arrived, and the french coachmakers copy our fashions as much as possible; but they are, as yet, far behind. The common run of vehicles is very indifferent. The handsomest equipage from London, loses much of its elegance here, from the slovenly manner in which it is sure to be

kept by a french coachman; from the tail of the latter, which it is very difficult to persuade him to cut off; and from the shabby horses, usually furnished by the jobmen. Apropos, a very ridiculous circumstance occurred a few days ago. All foreigners are permitted (notwithstanding the republican prohibition to natives) to have arms on their carriages, and to give their usual liveries: of course, several of the english, allowed their servants to wear gold laced cocked hats. Would you believe it possible, that the government was apprehensive of these hats being taken for the badges, given to distinguish the constituted authorities; and that, on this ground, they have been forbidden by an express order of the police, issued with proper solemnity? Such is the simple truth. French generals, those renowned and distinguished warriors, are apprehensive of english footmen being taken for them. What a strange littleness in great minds.

"Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?" I cannot help exclaiming with lord Chesterfield, "alas, poor human nature!"

I beg your pardon for this digression. I return to the bois de Boulogne; when the day is fine, the *promenade* is very lively; and the grotesque figures produced by the unnatural union of french finery, and english simplicity, serve to distinguish it from every thing else of the kind in Europe. In returning from this motley scene, at

four o'clock to day, I heard the sound of cannon: I learnt soon after, with inexpressible joy, that the news of the signature of the definitive treaty, was just arrived. Happy day, which gives peace to all the world; may you long be remembered, and may many, many years pass over, before you have a successor! at six, the wholè *façade* of the Thuilleries, its garden, "les Invalides," and the hotel of the minister of marine, were all (as if by magic,) splendidly illuminated. It grieves me to add, that this important intelligence has produced no effect at Paris. It has scarcely been mentioned in society, and I have walked about, the whole evening, admiring the taste with which the public buildings were lighted; and heartily joining in the satisfaction which occasioned them, without meeting one single group of french spectators. Indifference is "the order of the day;" and I really believe, that no subject of any kind, could animate the parisians, or rouse them from the stupid apathy, into which they have fallen, on the subject of politics. If "*spectacles*" have lost their attraction, it is in vain to try any other method; for these are the "penates" of the inhabitants of this great city. I hope and trust, that the peace will be received in England, in a very different manner. All good men will unite in rejoicing at the termination of a war, which, whether "just and necessary," as some assert, or wantonly undertaken as others

represent, was attended with such an unusual waste of public money, private happiness, and human blood.

I sincerely congratulate you, my dear sir, on this, the happiest event, which England has known for many years.

I remain, &c.

LETTER XXII.

The palais du *Luxembourg*.—*Theâtre d'Odéon*.—The pantheon or St. Génévieve.—Tombs of Rousseau and Voltaire.

Paris, april the 1st, 1802, (11 germinal).

MY DEAR SIR,

I WENT yesterday to see the palace of the Luxembourg, now appropriated to the use of the conservative senate, originally the residence of *monsieur*, the king's brother; and afterwards that of the executive directory. The building is now undergoing a thorough repair. It is therefore impossible to judge of it properly, in its present state. The grand *façade*, or front, remains unaltered, and is strikingly magnificent. I viewed it with particular pleasure; as the college at Oxford, where I past some of the happiest days of my life, and to which I have still the honour of belonging, was built after the model of this celebrated palace. This circumstance recalled so many interesting remembrances, that I with difficulty tore myself from the gates of the Luxembourg. I am told, that the proposed alterations are to be made on a great and extended scale; and that every member of the senate, is to have here, a distinct house, or spacious apartment. The gardens are also to receive every possible im-

provement. Several workmen were already employed in carrying this design into execution; but the whole is still too imperfect to give any idea of what it may ultimately become. I saw nothing but half formed gravel walks, formal avenues of trees, and preparations for a round basin of standing water. The ground is indeed too much surrounded with houses, even to make what we should call in England, a fine garden.

The magnificent theatre, called, " le théâtre français de l'Odéon," which formerly stood near the Luxembourg, and which was one of the most magnificent buildings of the kind in Europe, was, a few years ago, entirely burnt down, in the course of eight and forty hours. Nothing remains but the stone front, which the fire could not destroy, and which still serves to ornament this part of the town.

Being in the neighbourhood of *St. Génévière*, now called, " the Pantheon," I ordered my coachman to drive there.

St. Génévière appears nearly in the same state, in which I saw it, eleven years since; that is to say, quite unfinished. Though the interior is still far from having attained that point of perfection, proposed in the original plan, yet it is even in its present situation, very beautiful. As to the exterior, it is strikingly magnificent. Twenty two Corinthian pillars form the portico; eighteen of them are 54 feet high. There is a cupola

above, where it was intended to have placed a figure of Fame, 28 feet high; but this plan has never been carried into execution. At the extremity of this cupola, there is a gallery raised 166 french feet from the surface of the ground, whence we enjoyed a most extensive view of Paris. This is the best point, from which the town can be seen: and, as there is not here, as in London, that kind of mist, which arises from coal fires, the view was uninterrupted. I clearly distinguished from this spot, all the public buildings; and nearly every private house at Paris. It is, in short, a kind of real panorama. The ascent to the gallery is uncommonly easy, up a flight of stone steps, well lighted, and kept in such order, that I have not seen any stairs so clean, since I have been an inhabitant of this great city. The front, which has not suffered at all, during the revolution, has the following words written in large letters, over the principal porch.

"AUX GRANDS HOMMES, LA PATRIE RECONNOISSANTE*."

From the scaffoldings erected in different parts of the church, I was led to believe, that orders had been given for the immediate completion of the original plan. I therefore asked my con-

* "The gratitude of the country dedicates this building to the memory of great men."

ductor, when he supposed the whole would be concluded. He shrugged up his shoulders, and said, "il faut faire cette question au gouvernement. Vraisemblablement l'église sera achevée, quand le gouvernement aura tant d'argent qu'il ne saura pas en disposer autrement*." I am afraid this is putting it off "*sine die.*"

The dome and ornaments of the stairs are both worked with a degree of nicety, elegance, and care, which would be commended on a snuff box; and the whole building may be considered as a specimen of good taste, and masterly execution.

It will be remembered, that this was the spot in which, at the beginning of the revolution, it was proposed to confer immortality, (by burying in its vaults) such men, as by their talents, their virtues, or their courage, had deserved well of the republic. This idea, like many others, started during the fervour of popular enthusiasm, though splendid in theory, soon became very objectionable in practice. The honours of sepulchre in the pantheon, were contested for by the friends of deceased public men, with the same eagerness as they themselves had displayed during their lives, in the pursuit of the objects of their ambition; and as the merit which entitled an indi-

* You must ask that question of the government. The church will probably be finished, when the government has so much money, as not to know what to do with it otherwise.

vidual to the proposed reward, depended entirely on the capricious estimate of those, who happened to be in power, at the time of his death; the most illustrious, and the most contemptible characters; the virtuous and the corrupt; the hero and the coward; the man of talents, and the ignorant jacobin; the enlightened friend of humanity, and the sanguinary decemvir, received in their turn the honours of the pantheon. From this strange abuse, soon arose another, which, though derived from a better motive, was equally indecent. The bones of those, whom the successful party condemned, were dragged from the tomb, in which they had been placed with so much pomp and parade, perhaps only a year before, and thrown, like the carcases of dogs, on a neighbouring dunghill. Ashamed of having placed the remains of the infamous Marat, near those of Voltaire and Rousseau, the revolutionary demagogues may plead some excuse for this strong, but indecorous testimony of tardy repentance; but the scholar, and the friend of genius will hear, with regret, that the ashes of the eloquent Mirabeau, who (whatever his political faults might be) possessed no common talents, as an orator and a writer, experienced a similar indignity. If his integrity was not sufficiently evident to entitle him to a tomb among the benefactors of his country, yet when it was once erected, his literary merits ought to have saved it from destruction.

To prevent a recurrence of circumstances so little honourable to the french name, a decree was at last past, for clearing away all the monuments erected in the pantheon, excepting those of Voltaire and Rousseau. These I determined to visit. We accordingly descended into the vaults, which are neat, clean, well lighted, stone apartments, where we found the tombs of these celebrated men. On that of Rousseau only the following words are written:

"Ici répose l'homme de la nature et de la vérité*;" and a hand with a torch rises from the tomb, with this inscription, "il éclairit le monde même du tombeau†."

On the monument of Voltaire, the following epitaph is written on one side.

"Aux manes de Voltaire,
"L'Assemblée nationale
"A décrétée le 30 mai, 1791,
"Qu'il avoit mérité les honneurs
"Dûs aux grandes hommes‡."

On the second side.

"Poet, historien, philosophe,
"Il aggrandit l'esprit humain,
"Et l'apprit, qu'il devoit être libre§."

* Here reposes the man of nature and of truth.

† He enlightens the world even from the tomb.

‡ To the manes of Voltaire, the national assembly passed a decree, on the 30th of may, 1791, declaring, that he deserved the honours due to the memory of great men.

§ Poet, historian, philosopher, he enlarged the human kind, and taught it, that it ought to be free.

On the third side.

" Il défendit Calas,
" Serven,
" De la Barre et mont Bally *."

On the fourth side.

" Il combattit les athées
" Et les fanatiques.
" Il inspira la tolérance.
" Il réclama les droits de l'homme,
" Contre le monstre de la féodalité."

The bones of these distinguished men are in the tombs, which I have described. Rousseau was removed from the garden of Ermenonville, where his shade reposed in its favourite retreat, under the auspices of friendship; and the heart of Voltaire, which had remained for some years, as he desired, among those whom he loved at Ferney, was dragged from its former resting place to this more splendid, but less tranquil sepulchre.

I am, &c.

* He defended Calas, Serven, de la Barre, and mont Bally.

† He combated atheists and fanatics. He preached tolerance. He vindicated the rights of man against the monster of feudality.

LETTER XXIII.

Concordat with the Pope, ratified by the legislative body, after an eloquent speech by *Lucien Bonaparte*.—Madame Bonaparte's first drawing room.—Appearance of Dehayes at the opera, after a long absence.

Paris, april the 10th, 1802, (20 germinal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

ON thursday last, the legislative body, after a speech from Lucien Bonaparte, brother of the consul; who, as orator of the tribunate, very eloquently defended this favourite measure of government; ratified and approved the *concordat* with the Pope, by a large majority. The re-establishment of religion is therefore determined. I was not present on the occasion; but persons capable of judging, assure me, that Lucien's delivery was remarkably good; and that his speech was the finest heard in France, since the time of Mirabeau. As it will, of course, appear in the *Moniteur*, I shall not attempt to copy any of those imperfect statements which are, already, handed about.

Madame Bonaparte held, the same day, for the first time, a kind of court: that is to say, a card, being previously sent round by the prefect of the palace, who answers to our master of the ceremonies, saying, that madame Bonaparte would,

at three o'clock, receive the wives of foreign ministers; and " des étrangers de marque," such ladies as wished to be presented, accompanied their respective ambassadors, at the appointed time, to the palace of the Thuilleries. As Mrs. —— was of the number, you may depend on the account, which I shall now send you. The ladies were not in hoops or lappets; but were, in other respects, as much dressed as they would have been at St. James's. They were received by the wife of the *préfect du palais*, in the apartments appropriate to madame Bonaparte. She and the first consul, soon after appeared. A circle was then formed, and the consul walked round. In passing, he spoke to each lady with much politeness. Madame Bonaparte went through the same ceremony; and at last, seated herself, desiring her guests to follow her example. She talked again to those, who happened to be near her; and, after an interval of a few minutes, she rose, courtesied, thanked the ladies for the honour they had done her, and then retired. I understood that she behaved with great propriety. Her manners were simple, easy, and unaffected. She was polite to every one; and particularly civil to the english. Her apartments, on the ground floor, looking on the Thuilleries, are not large; but they are furnished with elegance, and considerable taste. Her footmen were splendidly dressed in green liveries, laced with gold; and

they, as well as the "valets de chambre," who waited in the antichamber, were particularly civil, respectful, and attentive. There were no foreign men present, excepting the ambassadors, and the prince of Orange; but it is understood, that she will soon have a drawing room, for the purpose of receiving such strangers, as are desirous of being introduced.

I shall conclude this letter, with a short account of the opera, from which I am just returned. The house was uncommonly crowded, on account of the first appearance this season, of the dancer Dehayes. This favourite performer, having been absent more than a year, in consequence of a fall, which rendered him incapable, during that time, of pursuing his profession, was received with every possible honour. A *ballet*, called, "le Retour de Zéphyr*," was composed on the occasion; and the light and gentle Zephyr was welcomed with loud and repeated applauses. His strength is not quite restored; but it is easy to see, that he is no mean proficient in the art of dancing. His steps are perfect, and perhaps not inferior to those of Vestris; but in point of grace, the comparison is infinitely in favour of the latter.

It is said, that Dehayes was convicted, during the time of Robespierre, of an attempt to emi-

* The return of Zephyr.

grate to England. He was condemned to the *guillotine*; but afterwards pardoned, on condition of dancing, during the whole of one season, without fee or reward, before "le peuple souverain." The agility, therefore, of a dancer, obtained that mercy, which was refused to the innocence of youth, to the grey hairs of age, to the purity of virtue, to the charms of beauty, and to the dignity of talent. After this example of the power it possesses, the art of dancing ought certainly to be ranked, in France, if not in other countries, among the liberal and useful sciences.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

Versailles.—St. Cloud.—Sèvre.—Petit Trianon.—Specimen of an extravagant bill.—Curious trial.—St. Germain.—Malmaison.—Waterworks of Marly.

Paris, april 13th, 1802 (24 germinal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I WENT yesterday, with a small party of english friends, to Versailles, and am just returned. I sit down now to give you the details of our little excursion.

We stopped at *St. Cloud*, which is situate about half way, to view that favourite palace of the unfortunate Lewis XVI, which will long be celebrated in history, on account of the extraordinary meeting held there by the council of five hundred, in the orangerie, or green house, which ended in the establishment of the present consular government.

St. Cloud is undergoing a thorough repair, previously to its being inhabited by Bonaparte. It is difficult, therefore, to form a proper estimate, either of what it formerly was, or of what it may become. I do not suppose it ever could have been on a very large scale. The gallery, which still remains, is a fine room, and the view is extensive from the large window, by which it is terminated. The walls are ornamented with some

excellent paintings (I believe) by "*le Brun.*" The chapel is now in a state of disorder, and I did not examine the pictures which it contains. The garden has been neglected, and can never have been either very extensive, or very beautiful. Formal walks, and regular rows of trees, constitute all its merit. As to the famous *jets d'eau*, or cascades, they are still in high preservation; and the Parisians, on a particular day in every year, come here, in splendid procession, to enjoy this favourite sight. I only saw unmoved stone dragons, Neptunes, frogs, swans, and griffons, from whose mouths these artificial waterfalls are vomited. In this state, at least, a *jet d'eau* forms but a disagreeable ornament in a garden, which ought to unite every beauty of nature, and to disdain every other.

The next object to St. Cloud, which attracted our attention, was the famous manufactory of *Sèvre*. The beautiful porcelain, which bears the name of this town, continues to be made here, under the immediate protection of the government. We visited the shop, or *magazin*, and were shown the several rooms of which it consists. In all of these were tables, covered with specimens of china made here, but I cannot say that they answered my expectation. They were neither as various, nor as splendid, as one should suppose they would be, at the principal depôt of so renowned a manufactory. Probably, the situation

in which France has been during the revolution, did not afford a sufficient number of purchasers, to induce the managers to keep by them any considerable quantity of expensive articles. There were several busts of Bonaparte in different sizes, all of which were strikingly resembling. There were also great and small busts of Voltaire, Franklin, and Rousseau.

Going thence to Versailles, we drove to Rambrand's, which is esteemed the principal hotel; but finding, on our arrival, that the best rooms were engaged, we changed our plan, and proceeded to *le Petit Trianon* in the park, which, formerly the much loved retreat of Marie Antoinette, has, in the strange metamorphosis things as well as men have experienced in France, become a common inn.

Having ordered dinner to be prepared in a small room, once celebrated as the luxurious *boudoir* of the ill fated queen, we proceeded to view the curiosities of Versailles. The park has lost some trees, and has been neglected. In other respects, it is not much altered. The *orangerie* * still retains, unimpaired, all its

* *Orangerie.*—The following description, given by *la Fontaine* of the same place in his time, is exactly descriptive of its present situation:

" *Comme nos gens avoient encore de loisir ils firent un tour à l'orangerie. La beauté et le nombre des orangers et des*

beauty. We walked through long avenues of orange trees, all of which are in high health and rich foliage. The gardener assured us, that some of those which were of very large dimensions, had been planted in the reign of Francis I.

We next visited the private library of the former kings of France, situate in a separate house in the town. There is nothing very particular in the building; but there were, above the several doors of the library, extremely pretty paintings of the different capitals of Europe. We were here shown a very beautiful collection of illuminated paintings, representing the splendid *fêtes* and *tournaments* given by the magnificent Lewis XIV.

Thence our guide wished to take us to the national manufactory of fire arms, which is carried on with great activity in this town; but having seen many acknowledgedly superior works of the same kind in England, we declined visiting it, and proceeded at once to the palace. This superb building has not suffered at all during the

autres plantes qu'on y conserve ne se sauroit exprimer. Il y a tel de ces arbres qui a resisté aux attaques de cent hivers."

" As our *friends* had still some time to spare, they took a turn in the *orangerie*, or green house. The beauty and number of orange and other plants here preserved, cannot be described. There are, among these trees, some which have resisted the attacks of a hundred winters."

La Fontaine, Amours de Psyche & de Cupidon.

revolution; though, from being neglected and uninhabited, it has contracted a kind of gloom, which forcibly recals the misfortunes of its last possessors, and the uncertainty of human grandeur. The magnificent furniture, which the apartments once contained, has been removed; but the walls are not without ornament, for the palace having been made (probably with the view of preserving it from popular violence) a *musée central*, or *depôt* of the works of art, now possesses several valuable pictures, and a few excellent statues. Among the former, I remarked some good *Claude Loraines*, and two beautiful portraits by *Vincent*. The subject of one was Henry IV of France; and the other, that of the celebrated president, Molè. The latter is painted in his parliamentary robes, heroically exposing his breast to the violence of the mob, and doing his duty, unmoved by the poniards raised against him. You seem to hear him exclaim, as history records he did, "La distance est grande de la main d'un assassin au cœur d'un honnête homme*."

We walked through the vast suite of rooms, which, once the seat of gayety, splendour, luxury, and royal magnificence, are now the abode of solitude, and the monument of fallen grandeur. It is unnecessary to state the many reflections which this spot created. We failed not to visit

* The distance is great from the hand of an assassin to the heart of an honest man.

the apartment which the unfortunate Lewis XVI occupied on the 6th of october, and in which *Marie Antoinette* took refuge. We were also shown the balcony window (now stopped up), where that virtuous and ill fated princess, *madame Elizabeth*, with a magnanimity truly heroic, presented herself, when the queen was called for, and being taken for her, voluntarily subjected herself to all the brutal violence of an irritated mob.

We likewise saw the opera house, built for the wedding of Lewis XVI, when dauphin, and which, during the last reign, was sometimes used as a theatre, and sometimes as a ball room. The apartment is still perfect, but the scenes and decorations have been removed.

On leaving the palace, we visited several *jets d'eau*; but were prevented from viewing the garden as particularly as we could have wished, a violent shower of rain having overtaken us.

The waterworks and pleasure grounds appear to have been much neglected.

We dined at the *Little Trianon*, and slept there. The room, which fell to my share, was that which the unhappy Lewis formerly occupied, and the key of the door had attached to it a label, on which could still be discovered, though half effaced, the words, "appartement du roi *."

* The king's apartment.

In calling for our bill this morning, we found that this little inn (ci-devant a royal residence) had two proprietors, one of whom lets the apartments, and the other supplies the table in the character of "traiteur." With the charges of the latter we had no fault to find; but the demand of the former was so ridiculously exorbitant, that I have kept the bill as a curiosity, of which I add the copy.

"Petit Trianon logement*.

	Francs.
Trois appartemens de maitre	36
Bougie	6
Bois	9
Quatre lits de domestique	12
Total	63

By way of reconciling us to this extravagant charge, the mistress of the house sent her daugh-

* Lodging account at the Little Trianon.

	Francs.
Three masters' rooms	36
Wax lights	6
Wood	9
Four servants' beds	12
Total	63

N. B. 63 francs of french money make exactly two guineas and a half english; and this sum was asked for one night's lodging (without eating or wine) for three masters' beds and four servants'.

ter to us, a very pretty girl, with the bill. Our gallantry, however, did not subdue our reason, and we determined to resist the demand. Our hostess having indignantly refused the half, which we offered as amply sufficient, Mr. ——— and I proceeded to Versailles, in pursuit of a *juge de pair*. After being sent to two or three justices, who told us, that it was not within their jurisdiction, we at last, in a miserable lodging, and at an obscure house, found the magistrate of the division. His dress and his appearance were not superiour to his residence; and from these united circumstances, we were far from expecting that justice which, in the result, we experienced.

Having heard our case, he granted a citation, requiring the attendance of the landlord; and, of course, suspended his decision till the arrival of the other party. While our servant, who carried the summons, went to execute it, we were present at a curious trial, the subject of which was a small quantity, I believe a quart, of vinegar. The defendant was a coarse masculine woman, at least sixty years of age, who, when she had exhausted all her fund of eloquence, burst into tears, and talked of the weak unprotected state of an unhappy widow. The plaintiff was a dirty ill looking fellow, with a witness of no better appearance. They all talked together; and the justice, instead of being able to moderate their violence, found it difficult to gain a hearing himself. After a

wrangle of an hour, and after swearing and counterswearing to the same fact, they went away, without the business being finally settled.

What entertained me much, was, that these disputants, in the middle of their harangues, turned round to my friend and me, and seemed anxious, each in his turn, to convince us, by their eloquence, of the justice of their respective cases; though we were not only strangers to the business, but also to the laws on which this *important* question was to be decided.

When our good landlady arrived, her bill was produced; and the justice having declared how exorbitant he thought it, she justified herself on three grounds:

1st. That we had not made a previous agreement; and *ergo*, that she had a right to demand whatever she pleased.

2dly. That she paid a great rent "à la nation*;" and that, therefore, "*la nation*" ought to permit her to make her guests pay a great rent for their lodgings.

3dly. That "*l'ambassadeur de l'empereur Russe* †," having lodged at her house only a week before, and not having objected to a charge of two louis per bed, "*les milords anglois*" ought to think her present demand extremely reasonable.

* To the nation.

† The ambassador of the emperor of Russia.

Notwithstanding this very able defence, the justice told her, that the law would not allow her *d'écorcher les étrangers** ; and very equitably decreed, that we should pay 36 instead of 63 *francs*. *Madame* received, very indignantly, the sum allotted her, and went away in a rage, declaring that, in future, no person should sleep at *le petit Trianon*, who would not bind himself before hand to pay the price which " son excellence l'ambassadeur de toutes les Russies" thought so reasonable.

So concluded our trial, which I have detailed as characteristic of what is to be expected at inns in France, if prior arrangements be not made by travellers; and likewise as an honourable proof, that justice, though not clad in ermine, is fairly administered. In going away, I was not a little surprised to find, that there were no costs to pay, and that even the summons had been issued gratuitously.

In England, where we possess so admirable a system of laws, how much are its advantages diminished, by the expenses attendant on every process! for, as a distinguished public man once well observed, though the temple of justice be open to all, it is like the London tavern, only the favourites of fortune dare approach its threshold.

* To fleece strangers.

In returning to our inn, we passed by the royal stables, which are still kept up, and filled with horses. These are now appropriated to the use of the officers of the army, who come here to be instructed in the menage, and who employ, for this purpose, the *quondam* riding school of the king. The horses appeared, at least to an english eye, very indifferent. We also saw here some arabians, lately arrived from Egypt. They are extremely plain, lanky, and awkward; but the groom assured us, on being asked if they were swift, " Oui, monsieur, comme les oiseaux."—(" Yes, sir, as swift as birds.") It was in vain to object to outward form, when we learnt that these animals had the talent of flying. If, according to the old jockey phrase, " no good horse can have a bad colour," certainly no horse who flies can be ugly.

Before we left Versailles, we visited the garden of *le petit Trianon*, which is rented by our honest landlady, and which may be seen, by paying a small sum for a ticket at the gate. It is kept in tolerable order, and has still strong marks of that good taste, with which it was originally made. It is really, and not nominally, an english garden; and would, even in our happy island, be deemed as prettily laid out, as the smallness of its extent would permit.

The little theatre, built by the queen, situate within the precincts of these grounds, is still in

existence, and has suffered no loss, excepting that of the beautiful glasses with which the boxes were once splendidly illuminated. The last object, to which we were led at Versailles, was "le grand Trianon," that favourite spot of Lewis XVI. This elegant building is also unhurt; and the fine marble pillars, which form the entrance, excited all our admiration. The poverty, into which the inhabitants of the town have fallen, in consequence of the revolution, is strikingly apparent. In every corner, we were surrounded by half-starved and half-naked beggars, whose importunities were not a little troublesome.

In returning to Paris, we took the road of St. Germain. The old castle still remains; but its outward appearance was so gloomy, that we felt no inclination to visit the interiour. If the french monarch intended to pay a compliment to the pretender, in giving him a palace as nearly as possible resembling that of St. James's, his choice was admirable. The view from the terrace is pretty, but by no means either as extensive, nor as rich, as I expected from its celebrity.

In continuing our road, we saw the celebrated waterworks of Marly, which are preserved in all their perfection. We likewise passed by the famous aqueduct, and by *Malmaison*, the private seat of the first consul. The latter has nothing very particular to distinguish it. It is simply a moderate sized house, situate near the river, but so

low, that it cannot command a very extensive prospect. I hear, the grounds are well laid out, and that the furniture of the house unites every thing which taste could order, or luxury afford. We reached Paris about six o'clock; and my first employment, after dinner, has been to write you this account, as I know that Versailles, and its neighbourhood, are among the number of objects, about which english curiosity is excited.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXV.

"*Long Champ*," account of that annual promenade, date of its origin, and of the great preparations made this year for attending it.—The bustle and gayety which it produced at Paris.

Paris, april the 16th, 1802, (27 germinal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

ALL Paris has been alive for the last three days. Can you guess the reason? Perhaps you will imagine, that the inhabitants, roused from the state of lethargy, into which they have for some time back been plunged, are beginning to give sincere but tardy marks of joy, at the reestablishment of internal order, and external peace. Not at all, my good friend. A subject, much more interesting to the parisians, is the cause of the show and gayety so generally exhibited. Know, then, that "*Long Champ*" has begun! I must now, like other learned commentators, explain my explanation.

"Long Champ" is the name of a village, situate on the other side of the "Bois de Boulogne," of which latter place I spoke to you in a former letter. In this village stood an abbey, or church; and one of the holy fathers, some hun-

dred years ago, had a voice of such extraordinary sweetness, that, when high mass was performed, crowds of Parisians flocked to hear him. His popularity was not confined to the lower class, and the *noblesse* shared the curiosity of the public. The fashion of going to Long Champ so rapidly increased, that, in a short time, it was no uncommon thing to see whole strings of splendid carriages at the door of the convent. The road to this village became the favourite ride, and vanity soon discovered, that it afforded an excellent opportunity of displaying all the varieties of dress, and all the pomp of equipage. In the course of a few years, it became an established custom, at this particular period of the year, to make, during three days, not an humble pilgrimage, but a splendid procession, to Long Champ. The mass and the singer were soon forgotten; but the *promenade* continued, and increased every year in the magnificence of parade. To appear, on this occasion, with becoming grandeur, the haughty, but often distressed noble, would, for months beforehand, deprive himself of his ordinary comforts. To rival "les dames de bonne compagnie*" in richness of dress, in show of equipage, and blaze of diamonds, was the grand object of the admired *belles* of the opera house; and the means of

* "Ladies of good company," or, as we should say in english, women of character.

doing so, was the exacted price of those smiles, which the well beneficed prelate, or the wealthy *financier*, were sometimes permitted to enjoy. The *Bourgeois* and their wives appeared in their humble *cabriolets*, but the former wore their sunday apparel; and the latter were loaded with all the tinsel finery, which, during the course of the year, they had been able to collect. The common people, or *la canaille* (as they were then indignantly called), were equally fond of this procession; and, at the risk of being run over, crowded and completed the show, some dressed in tattered regimentals, some in faded silk coats, and ragged embroidered waistcoats, and others with bag-wigs and wooden shoes.

Such was the custom during "l'ancien régime." The amusements of the french vanished with their old political institutions, and "horrendum dictu," Long Champ was long unobserved.

Robespierre, and after him the directors, forbade every thing which bore the least resemblance to the customs of former times; but when Bonaparte came into power, the system was instantly changed, and the people, left to follow their own inclinations, greedily returned to all their former diversions. "Long Champ" was of the number; and, since the 18th of brumaire, it has been gradually recovering its ancient magnificence. This year, from the reestablishment of peace, and the

confluence of foreigners, it was expected to be finer than ever; and vast preparations have, during some weeks past, been making. Milliners tortured their fancy to invent new fashions; mantuamakers passed whole nights without sleep, in executing the orders which they had received; coachmakers exerted themselves with all the art of their trade, and all the vanity of their country, in endeavouring to imitate the carriages of the english; horses were sent for from every part of the world; regiments of tailors were employed in making coats for the *beaux*, habits for the ladies, and laced jackets for their grooms; strings of boots were seen dangling on the backs of porters in every quarter of the town; saddles were as much in requisition, as if a great military project, by the means of cavalry, had been in agitation; and I have been confidently assured that no less than three thousand pair of leather breeches were ordered on the occasion.

In consequence of these active preparations, and of "Long Champ" having been, for some weeks back, infinitely more the subject of conversation than either the peace, or the reestablishment of religion, I expected, at least, a very brilliant sight. I must say, I was disappointed. The only thing which pleased me very much, was the bustle which it produced in the town, and the gayety with which it animated the faces of the Parisians. For three days, every vehicle in the

shape of a carriage, and every animal which claimed the name of horse, has been dragged into use, and become part of the procession. About two o'clock, a military guard was posted at the beginning of the Champs Elisées, to preserve order, (for nothing here is done without soldiers); and from that hour, till some time after sunset, the crowd gradually increased. At three, the line of carriages reached from "la place de la Concorde" to the "Bois de Boulogne;" and, of course, there were frequent stoppages, even at the beginning of the *promenade*. The road not employed in this manner, was filled with equestrians of all ranks, and the walk on both sides was equally thronged with passengers on foot. There were some few elegant english equipages, well appointed, and others spoiled, by the shabby appearance of the servants, or the extreme badness of the horses. The french coachmakers, in one or two instances, successfully imitated the fashions of London; but, generally speaking, the attempt only served to prove the vast distance which exists, between the two countries, in the art of constructing carriages.

Mixed with "les voitures *à l'anglaise, ou véritablement anglaises**" were seen old fashioned *berlins*, family coaches, and superannu-

* Carriages in the english fashion, or carriages really english.

ated *cabriolets* of all descriptions. Phaetons, gigs, curricles, and whiskies, completed the procession. Among the horsemen were seen a few returned emigrants, who had so well copied the dress of our young men of *ton*, that they might have been mistaken for the beaux of Bond street; but the greater number (*malgré* their leather breeches and boots, their blue frocks and high crowned hats) betrayed the forgery, by the preposterous addition of ear-rings, coloured capes, or pointed toes. The ladies appeared in every variety of clothing. Some, who ventured to be their own charioteers, assumed the neat and appropriate dress of an "amazone," or habit. Others, decorating, and concealing as little as possible, the charms of their person, shone in all the brilliance of their evening apparel. Worked gowns, laced caps, and showy turbans, were sometimes exhibited from the windows of hackney coaches; and a dirty buggy had, not unfrequently, the honour of conveying three or four damsels, whose *costume* would not have been unsuited to the first heroine of the stage. It is impossible to describe, or convey, the faintest idea of the grotesque figures which appeared on this occasion; and, notwithstanding the trouble and expense to which so many individuals had exposed themselves, by the purchase of new carriages, new liveries, new horses, new dresses, and last not least, new leather breeches, the

whole appeared to me but a shabby exhibition, and dull amusement.

Moving, in slow procession, to the other side of the *Bois de Boulogne*, during five or six hours, constituted the whole pleasure of this vaunted *fête*. There were certainly some elegant carriages, and some handsome horses; but the number was too inconsiderable to make amends for the crowd of those of a contrary description. Nothing could be more tiresome than sitting in one of these vehicles, as they were compelled, every instant, to stop, on account of the lengthened line, which increased every moment. Persons on horseback were equally ill off, as it required the utmost care to avoid being driven against the wheels of the carriages; and as for the pedestrians, they were almost buried in a volley of dust.

Such is the celebrated promenade of Long Champ, which, though an annual festival, appears to me a wretched and pitiful imitation of Hyde park on an ordinary sunday. Yet the french are delighted with their amusement; and in returning this evening, I heard on every side, "Quel beau spectacle! quelles jolies voitures! quels magnifiques chevaux! quelle belle parure! Vraiment c'est charmant* !"

* What a fine sight! what pretty carriages! what beautiful horses! what elegant dresses! Really it is charming!

It is not a little flattering to the vanity of an englishman, to see how rapidly the french are adopting our fashions; and, notwithstanding the awkward manner in which they are sometimes copied, yet such is the general bias, that I entertain no doubt that, in the space of ten years, (if the peace should last so long), it will become almost impossible to distinguish, by his dress, a native of France from one of England.

The ladies of Paris, and those of London, differ, indeed, very widely in their toilet. Perhaps they might reciprocally improve by observing each other; and while the former would do right to respect and imitate the modesty, with which the latter are usually clad, our fair countrywomen might also, without any injury to their beauty, or any violation of that delicacy, which is their brightest ornament, adopt some of that taste, elegance, and fancy, which are often seen in the dress of a well bred frenchwoman.

Adieu, my dear sir. I am heartily tired of my subject, and fear you will have been so some time. I therefore take my leave for the present.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

Te Deum sung at *Nôtre Dame*, in honour of the peace and the reestablishment of religion.—Military insolence.—Account of the ceremony.—Illuminations in the evening.—Indifference of the people.

Paris, april the 18th, 1802, Easter sunday (28 germinal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

TO day will probably be long remembered in the annals of France, on account of the promulgation of the law for (" *l' établissement des cultes*") the reestablishment of religion; on account of the definitive treaty of peace with England, the ratifications of which were exchanged this morning at the Thuilleries; and of the " Te Deum" sung at *Nôtre Dame*, in honour of these united events.

I wished very much to be present at a ceremony, which was rendered so particularly interesting by the number of curious concurring circumstances, too obvious to be detailed. Having no ticket, I went to the church at six o'clock in the morning, hoping to make my way, among the crowd, into those places, which were not appropriated to the constituted authorities. The doors were not open; and about a hundred persons, who were already arrived, stood enclosed in a kind of barrier, which seemed to have been

been put up for the purpose of preventing too great a press at the first opening of the gates. I placed myself against this bar, and hoped to gain admittance in the second division. I was soon followed and surrounded by a considerable crowd; and, after we had all remained about two hours in this uncomfortable state, a detachment of soldiers arrived, and attempted instantly to clear a passage. We were already so squeezed together, that it was impossible to make room for the military, without either losing our places, or incurring the danger of suffocation. When the soldiers perceived that, notwithstanding the blows which they dealt around them without ceremony, the people did not immediately make way, they lost all patience; and, not content with fixing their bayonets, called out for a detachment of horse. The brandishing of the one, and the fear of the other, soon dispersed the mob; but not till some had been wounded, and several severely bruised.

I could not help reflecting, with some degree of indignation, on this singular scene. In England, under a monarchical form of government, the military are not allowed to interfere, but in cases of positive danger, or actual insurrection; and even then under the orders of a civil magistrate. In France, where the system is called "republican," and every man supposed to constitute a part of the sovereignty, the body of the

people, coming quietly to see the first solemn service of that religion, which is said to be restored in compliance with their wishes, are driven with blows and military violence from the doors of that church, in which peace, liberty, equality, and good order, are about to be celebrated. Perhaps, indeed, it may be urged, that this was only a necessary precaution of the police, and that the object of the guard was to prevent that riot and danger to which the public, not so protected, would have been exposed. The answer is plain. If it was thought necessary to maintain order by the assistance of the military power, the sentinels ought to have been placed the preceding night, or at the dawn of morning. It was adding insult to cruelty, to permit the people to assemble, and after the loss of several hours, and the endurance of great fatigue, to dismiss them in the manner I have described.

It is needless for me to say, that I soon relinquished all hope of getting into the church, and thought myself happy in being able to make my escape unhurt from the claws of these heroes.

In going away, I perceived, at the window of an adjoining hospital, nearly opposite the church, some ladies of my acquaintance, who were so obliging as to offer me a place near them, from which I might see the procession.

I had scarcely taken this situation, when a ticket for one of the privileged places in the

church was given me by a person, who was unwilling to risk the difficulties, with which the approach to the doors seemed attended. After being sent about to different gates, I at last found admittance at one. When I reached the gallery, it was so completely full, that I found myself compelled to take refuge in the orchestra. From this situation I was again driven by the soldiers; and in despair I returned to the gallery, where, standing on the back of a tottering chair, and with at least twenty rows of spectators before me, I caught, not without some danger, a very imperfect glimpse of this splendid ceremony.

What I did not see myself, I shall relate on the authority of persons, who were more fortunately situate, and on whose accuracy I know I can depend.

The procession began with a numerous escort of different regiments. Among these were particularly remarked " les guides," a corps of handsome young men, clad in hussar dresses, and mounted on beautiful horses, who excited universal admiration. Next to them came the " *gens d'armes*," or " *régiment d' élites*," lately raised. They are men of a very respectable appearance, in blue uniforms, faced with yellow, whence long epaulets are suspended. These, as well as the buttons, are of silver, as is the lace of their hats. Their horses are black. The consular guards, and several regiments of the line,

completed the military cavalcade. The ministers of state, and the "corps diplomatique," came next, and formed a long line of carriages. Those of the latter were drawn each by four horses, and ornamented with all the escutcheons of heraldic pomp. Those of the former were without arms; but they had all six horses, and their servants, dressed alike, wore splendid liveries, now put on for the first time, of yellow, gold, and red. A small corps of *Mamalukes* in their egyptian *costume*, some of whom led unmounted arabians, and a few aides-de-camp, immediately preceded the carriage, in which sat Bonaparte, accompanied by the other two consuls. His coach, new on the occasion, was simply elegant, and drawn by eight very fine horses richly caparisoned. His servants appeared in green coats and red waistcoats, on all the seams of which were rows of broad gold lace. The consuls were received at the door of the church by the archbishop of Paris, who placed over their head a *dais* (or canopy).

Bonaparte, with *Cambaceres* on his right, and *le Brun* on his left hand, was conducted in this manner to a throne erected near the altar, under which their three chairs were placed. A similar throne appeared opposite, in which sat the cardinal legate.

The bishops bowed first to the altar, secondly to the consuls, and lastly to the cardinal. This

was remarked by the public; as, under the monarchy, the representative of the pope was permitted to receive this homage before the sovereign of the country.

The oath settled by the *concordat* having been taken by the clergy, high mass was instantly said.

At the conclusion of this ceremony, M. *de Boisgelin*, formerly archbishop of Aix, lately named archbishop of Thoulouse, ascended the pulpit, and delivered a discourse appropriate to the occasion. I regretted much, that the distance at which I was placed was so great, that it was impossible for me to hear the venerable preacher, who excited no little curiosity, from the singularity of his situation. He is the same man, who, at the "*sacre*," or coronation, of Lewis XVI, preached in the same pulpit, before that unfortunate monarch. His sermon will, no doubt, be published in the "moniteur," where you will have an opportunity of seeing it.

It was the custom formerly, on these occasions, for the bishop, in beginning his discourse, to address himself to the king. A similar form was observed to day, and the expression of "*sire*" was exchanged for that of "*citoyen premier consul.*" After the sermon, "Te Deum" was chanted. All the band of the opera house was employed, and *Laïs* and *madame Bolla* supplied the vocal parts. The effect was fine, yet, comparatively, very inferiour to our musical meetings in Westminster

abbey. I heard some *connoisseurs* object to the air, as not sufficiently grave or dignified for the subject which it was intended to celebrate. As I am totally ignorant of music, I can form no judgment as to the justice of the criticism.

The church was immensely full. The aisle was filled with the military, the different uniforms of which had a splendid effect. Behind the consuls sat the ambassadors, the ministers, and the generals. In a box above, at the entrance of the chapel, was placed madame Bonaparte, accompanied by her daughter and some other ladies. On the other side was a similar box, appropriate to the use of the ladies of the "corps diplomatique."

The two galleries or choirs, which surround the church, were divided into an orchestra for the music, into seats for the different constituted authorities, and into places for such individuals as were favoured with tickets. In the latter were of course seen all the persons at Paris most distinguished for situation, talent, or beauty. The *coup d'œil* altogether was very striking. The procession returned with the same ceremony as that in which it arrived; and all the streets of Paris were lined with spectators.

A discharge of sixty cannon was heard at the departure of the first consul from the Thuilleries; and his arrival at the church, and his return to the palace, were announced in the same manner.

In the evening, the palace was splendidly illuminated. Every division of the arches forming the front towards the garden was covered with lamps, and a lustre of lights was suspended from each. The garden itself was prettily, but less brilliantly, decorated, than on the *fête* in honour of the preliminaries.

All the public buildings and offices were also lighted; but the only illumination at all remarkable, beside those which I have named, was that of Mr. Jackson, his majesty's envoy extraordinary. The gates of "l'hôtel de Caramon," where he lodges, were entirely covered with lamps of different colours; the effect of which was much admired, as at Paris that mode of decorating their rejoicings is unknown. On the right hand were the letters, R. F. (République Française); and on the left, G. R. (Georgius Rex).

I forgot to mention, that Bonaparte was much applauded by the populace, in going to *Nôtre Dame;* and that *madame* received the same compliment, though she went there without any parade, in a plain handsome carriage, and seemed to decline, rather than to court, the notice of the public.

During the illuminations there was no noise, and, indeed, no expression of joy. Very few people were seen in the Thuilleries, though the weather was fine, and the day sunday. The

more I see of the french, the more am I astonished and disgusted at the indifference which they have contracted. Their dulness is the more disagreeable, from it's being unnatural; and I cannot help exclaiming, every hour, with Voltaire,

" Que je plains un françois, quand il est sans gaieté;
Loin de son élément le pauvre homme est jetté *.

Adieu.

* How I pity the frenchman, whose gayety's lost;
The creature's a wretch, from his element toss'd.

LETTER XXVII.

Palais de Justice.—Account of the different tribunals or courts of law.

Paris, april the 30th, 1802 (10 floréal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I WENT this morning to the "*Palais de Justice*," in order to visit the different tribunals. The "*façade*," or front, of this building has a commanding appearance. A handsome iron railing, with three gates, forms its barrier; after passing through which, you ascend a lofty flight of stone steps. The avenues to the principal hall are filled with shops of various descriptions, and particularly those of booksellers. The hall, or central room, which is of considerable extent, forms a kind of antichamber to the different courts. I went into one of the "tribunals de premier instance," in each of which three judges preside. They wear long bands, and black coats, from which is suspended a cloke or gown of black silk. The advocates plead in a sort of bar; but, excepting being dressed in black, have no distinguishing badge, or professional decoration. The judges had a grave appearance; and, though they did not seem to be men of much importance, conducted themselves with decency and

propriety. I was present while some causes were argued; but they were not of sufficient consequence to enable me to form any estimate of the talents of the advocates, now called, in the general change of name, " des défenseurs officiaux *." As to their outward garb, it was not prepossessing; and, if it were not unjust to form any conclusion from mere exteriors, I should say, that a french counsel and an english one appear to be drawn from a very different class of society. I next saw a court, which, under the title of " tribunal de la police correctionelle," is charged with the investigation and punishment of petty offences. I here heard the trial of a man charged with pawning, for his own use, some goods belonging to a shop, in which he was employed as a workman. The witnesses were regularly examined; after which the criminal was very patiently heard in his defence. As he had nothing to urge but his poverty and the charges of a large family, he was found guilty by the judges, (for I observed no jury) and was sentenced, though an old offender, to only six months imprisonment. This trial having satisfied my curiosity about " la police correctionelle," I next visited the chief or supreme court of the republic, which is called " le tribunal de cassation." Here every thing bore a

* Official defenders.

more dignified appearance. The room was lofty, the seats elevated, and the judges (whose number was considerable) seemed, by their dress, their manner, and their language, to be well suited to the important functions of their office. They wore black and red gowns, with cocked hats, the cords of which were of gold lace. Nothing can be more respectable than the exterior of this court; of the proceedings of which I could form no idea, as the judges were employed in reading papers relating to mere matters of form. I imagine, that this is the tribunal intended, in some respects, to replace the parliament of Paris. The magistrates, as far as I could form an opinion from this cursory visit, seem men of education, learning, and polished manners.

Before I left the *Palais de Justice*, I looked in at the criminal court of the "*département de Seine.*" A culprit was reading a long written defence, which I had not the patience to hear concluded. The room was handsome, and the proceedings orderly and correct. I saw here nothing like a jury; yet I am told, that all capital offences are tried by that mode of process. An italian was a few days ago tried in this court, and convicted of assassination. I regret much, that I was not present at the trial. I did not hear of the circumstance till to day. He yesterday underwent the punish-

ment of the *guillotine*, being led to the scaffold in a red shirt, this disgrace being added to the sentence in cases of murder. I ought to mention, in honour of the present criminal laws of France, that this is the first individual, who has been condemned to death, during the six months which I have passed at Paris.

Underneath the "*Palais de Justice*" is situate that fatal prison, called "*la Conciergerie.*" It was here that the sanguinary *Robespierre* immured the daily victims of his wild and unrelenting tyranny; who awaited, within its dismal walls, the signal of death, under the insulting and degraded name of trial. It was here, that rank, beauty, age, philosophy, virtue, and patriotism, took the places of vice; and, in the caverns destined to receive the blackest perpetrators of hideous crime, were hurled, among multitudes of other innocent and dignified characters, the learned *Condorcet*, the ingenious *Lavoisier*, the respectable *Madame Roland*, the venerable *Malesherbes*, and the lovely, courageous, and once haughty queen of France. When I have been forced to make such painful reflections, in viewing the different objects which present themselves at Paris, I have always found some consolation in looking round me, and seeing how completely that system of suspicion, bloodshed, and injustice, has passed away. Those horrors, so disgraceful to France,

took place in a moment of national delirium (if I may be permitted the expression); and the inhabitants of Paris, who committed, or rather suffered, the scenes of judicial murder, which every day contaminated the streets of the capital, now, restored to their senses, are the first to deplore and execrate them. I am persuaded, that crimes like these can never again find their way into the polished metropolis of this great, brave, and ingenious people.

With this hope I shall conclude my letter—a hope, in which I am certain that you will warmly and cordially unite.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

The gardens and walks of Paris.

Paris, may the 2d, 1802 (12 floréal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

WHENEVER you come to Paris, come with the smiling month of may. On my arrival here, at the end of october, I was disgusted with the dirt of the streets, the mire of the Thuilleries, the ruts of the Boulevards, and the general gloom of the town. Accustomed to take a great deal of exercise, I could not persuade myself to be shut up, the whole of every day, either in a hot room, or a close carriage. I therefore continued to walk about: but, while my feet were cut to pieces at every step, I was frequently in danger of being run over by a rapid cabriolet, or squeezed to atoms under the ponderous wheels of an overloaded cart. Nor was I consoled for this hazardous undertaking by meeting with any conversable persons of my acquaintance.

The parisians, who have carriages, never think of walking during the severe days of winter; and those who do not possess that convenience, spend the greater part of every day at home. To save the expense of a *fiacre**, they will,

* Hackney coach.

indeed, sometimes use their feet in going to a *restaurateur's*, a *spectacle*, or a ball, or in paying some of those innumerable visits, in which an inhabitant of this town passes half his life; but, as to taking exercise for health, it never enters into the calculations of a frenchman. Nothing, therefore, could be so dismal as the streets in the months of november, december, and january; and a severer punishment could not be devised for the daily murder of time committed by our Bond street loungers, than to condemn them to a three months pilgrimage, at that period of the year, round the streets of Paris.

The spring has, with fine weather, changed the face of every thing here; and a person fond of exercise may now have all the advantages which he can possibly desire.

The *Thuilleries* and *Champs Elisées*, which in winter are almost impassable, now offer excellent gravel walks, and delightful shade under the long avenues of lofty trees. Here crowds are collected at almost every hour of the day; and, besides long lines of pedestrians, rows of chairs are filled with ladies eating ice, and politicians reading newspapers.

The Bois de Boulogne affords an admirable ride for persons in carriages or on horseback, and a lengthened walk for those on foot.

Besides these, there are several delightful gardens open to the public in different parts of the

town. The Boulevards, which surround Paris on every side, are now seen to great advantage. The walks are in high order, the trees are in rich foliage; and the number of mountebanks, print sellers, quack doctors, and shows of all kinds, collected here, and the crowds of persons and carriages which are constantly passing, make them present a very curious and lively scene.

The "*Hameau de Chantilly*," or *Elisée de Bourbon*, very near the Champs Elisées, has a very pretty, though not an extensive garden, into which, for a few *sols*, you gain admittance. It was hence I saw madame Garnerin ascend, about a month ago, in a balloon, unaccompanied by any one. The day was fine; and we were all much delighted with the courage of the fair heroine, who was the first female that had ventured alone on such an expedition. She descended a few leagues from Paris, and supped, the same evening, in public, at the *Hameau*, where she was received with universal and merited applause.

I am particularly pleased with a garden called "*Mousseux, ou les délices de Chartre*," situate in the *Fauxbourg St. Honoré*, and within the gates of Paris. It formerly belonged to the duke of Orleans; but, having been confiscated with the rest of his enormous fortune, is now national property, and open every day for the use of the

public. The garden is arranged in the english taste, commands an extensive view, and has all the advantages and appearance of grounds at a considerable distance from a capital. Fine verdure, trees of every kind in the most luxuriant blossom, variety of flowers, a clear sky, and birds warbling a thousand wild notes, make you entirely forget the town; and the whole seems a fairy scene produced by enchantment.

The only things in bad taste, I mean the modern antiques and drawbridges, are now falling into decay; and the artificial ruins are daily becoming real ones.

The salon or house consists of a long gallery; but it has been so much neglected during the revolution, that it is now in a very tottering and dangerous state. "Mousseux" is still a most delightful spot, and must have been exquisitely so, when kept in proper order. I doubt much, if such a garden is to be found within the walls of any other capital in Europe.

I ought to mention, that, though the town is completely hidden in the shady walks of this charming retreat, one of the best views of Paris is enjoyed from a hillock of easy ascent, situate in the centre of these grounds. There is a *traiteur* at the door of the garden, where dinners may be ordered; but his accommodations (as far as can be judged from the outward appearance of his

habitation) I should suppose not very superiour. I have heard, however, of large and fashionable parties, who have dined here. Nothing is paid for walking in the garden.

At the further end of the *Bois de Boulogne*, about two miles from Paris, there is another place of this kind, which, whenever you come to Paris, I recommend your visiting. It is called "*Bagatelle*," and formerly belonged to the *prince de Condé*, who is said to have built the house and arranged the grounds in the space of six weeks. The building, which is now an inn or tavern, is light and elegant; and the garden (allowing for some few exceptions) is laid out with considerable taste. Near the house there is a very pretty and very striking view of the bridge of *Neuilly*. The accommodations here are good, and a person fond of the country cannot pass a fine evening more agreeably, than by dining at *Bagatelle*, and strolling afterwards about the grounds.

Before I conclude my account of the gardens of Paris, I ought to mention two, which are opened at this season of the year, at a late hour, and usually frequented after the opera, or other *spectacles;* I mean *Frascati* and *Tivoli*.

Frascati consists of a large house and small garden, situate on the Boulevard. The gate stands in the corner of "la rue de la Loi." The apartments, elegantly painted with italian

landscapes, are large and numerous, and splendidly lighted every evening. The garden was illuminated last night, for the first time this season, and is as pretty as its limited extent can permit. It is the fashion to come here about ten o'clock; and the amusement consists in walking about, chatting with your friends, eating ices and cakes, or drinking tea, punch, or lemonade, the sale of which articles constitute the whole profits of the landlord, to whom nothing is paid for admittance. Frascati is, in short, a kind of coffee house; and, notwithstanding the smell of brandy, gin, and rum, generally prevalent, is frequented by ladies as well as gentlemen. When I first came here, I supposed that these ladies were of a *certain description;* but I was soon undeceived; and, besides seeing at this place the most respectable females of Paris, was assured by a *ci-devant comtesse* excessively rigid on matters of etiquette, "que toute la bonne compagnie y alloit*." After this authoritative decision, it would be presumptuous to doubt the propriety of going to *Frascati;* and our most scrupulous countrywomen may, without apprehension of being taken either for "filles" or "parvenues," enjoy this strange and singular amusement.

Tivoli is but just opened for the season. I have been there once. It is a large and beautiful

* That all the good company of Paris went there.

garden, situate in "la rue St. Lazare," in the "Chaussée d'antin." It was illuminated with much taste; the trees are lofty; and the whole seemed to resemble what I imagine our Vauxhall was, before it was covered in.

There was a band of music, and dancing, on a platform erected for the purpose. There was also a party of tumblers. The company was not either very numerous or very genteel; but the night was not hot, and fine weather is necessary to render this place agreeable; as there is no house or shelter of any kind. In the months of july and august *Tivoli* must be delightful.

I forgot to mention, that there were round-abouts, (as they are vulgarly called in England) on which full grown people were very gravely amusing themselves. I heard, the other day, of a duel, which took place in consequence of a dispute for one of these places. You will scarcely believe the report; yet I am every day convinced, that there is nothing so ridiculous, that fancy can suppose, which does not actually and frequently take place in this most extraordinary town.

Having given you this short sketch of the amusements "al fresco," I shall conclude with repeating my recommendations to you, whenever you come to Paris, to come in the spring.

Winter is, indeed, the time for private society; but I have found from experience, that a foreigner has so little to expect on this head, that it is infinitely wiser to choose a season, when an infinite variety of amusements, and all the charms of Nature, in their richest and happiest colours, offer a sure and constant fund of pleasure.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

The manufactory of "*Gobelins*," the observatory, "*les Enfans trouvés*," "*Champ de Mars*," les *Invalides*, and the temple of Mars, containing the colours taken from different nations, and the tomb of *Turenne*.—*Le Musée des Monumens françois*, or collection of monuments.—List of the most esteemed of these.—Note to this letter contains the account of a dinner at the first consul's.

Paris, may the 5th, 1802 (15 floréal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

AS my stay at Paris draws towards a conclusion, I have occupied the three or four last days in visiting those objects of curiosity, which as yet I had neglected to see.

The manufactory of *Gobelins* deserves all its celebrity. The colours, the design, and the execution of the tapestry made here, are equal to the productions of the finest painting. I was shown some specimens, which were uncommonly beautiful, particularly two pieces, one of which represented the assassination of the admiral *Coligni*, and the other the heroic conduct of the *président Molé*, copied from the picture at Versailles, an account of which I have already given.

There are ninety persons now employed, of whom I saw several at work. It is astonishing with what facility they seem to perform the most difficult tasks, but I am told that the art is not

learnt without much time and considerable attention. The apprenticeship requires six years, and at least eighteen are necessary to make a proficient. The workmen are not locked up within the walls of the manufactory, as was the case during the monarchy, but they are kept under the constant "surveillance* of the police." Most of the pieces now in hand have been ordered by the first consul, and are destined to form the ornament of St. Cloud, and other public buildings.

From the *Gobelins*, situate in the most distant part of the Fauxbourg St. Germain, I drove along the new Boulevard to the observatory. I found here only some common sized telescopes, on which I observed with pride the respectable name of "Dollond," of London. I was informed that a magnificent instrument of this kind is preparing on the plan of Herschel, which is to be twenty-two feet long, with a speculum of platina. It is to be moved on a platform, for the purpose of making observations, by means of a machine invented for the purpose. I ascended the top of the building, and the view thence, which commands all Paris, is grand and striking.

Near the observatory is the nursery of that humane establishment called "les Enfans trouvés," which is still kept up on the old philanthropic plan. Orphan children, deprived by death of

* *Surveillance*—Watch, or special care.

their parents, or abandoned by them, are received here without question, recommendation, or inquiry, and are nursed with tenderness, well fed, properly educated, and lastly, qualified for some trade or profession, in which they are afterwards placed at the expense of the public. Their infancy is passed in the building shown to me; they are, at a certain age, sent into the country, for the benefit of the air, and then return to the principal hospital of the institution at Paris, where their education is completed. Their number is seldom less than a thousand.

I shall continue to speak of the different objects I have lately seen, in the same order in which I visited them.

The *Champ de Mars*, where, on the 14th of july, 1790, I was present, when the unfortunate Lewis XVI received and repeated the oath of fidelity to that constitution which was so soon violated, has still the remains of that vast amphitheatre, made by the activity and zeal of the parisians in the course of fourteen days, and on which were seated nearly a million of people. I recollected all the spots, where the principal authorities were placed on that memorable day; and it will be needless for me to repeat the innumerable reflections which were created by a remembrance of the extraordinary and manycoloured events which have since occurred. The

Ecole Militaire, which is now a barrack for the *consular horse guards*, forms the front and principal ornament of the *Champ de Mars*, which is terminated on the other side by the river *Seine*. *L'Ecole Militaire* was built, in 1751, from a plan of Gabriel. It has a handsome *façade*, and a lofty dome, with a dial, and the figures of Time and Astronomy.

The building of "les Invalides" presents one of the most striking objects of Paris. Besides the beauty of its construction, its handsome entrance, its four courts, its celebrated clock, its lofty dome, and elegant pillars, it contains, in the principal hall, or chapel, now called "le Temple de Mars," the colours, or ensigns, taken during the war, by the republican armies, from the different powers opposed to France. This beautiful room at least a hundred feet long, is lined on all sides with the badges of triumph, many of which bear, from their tattered appearance, the most convincing proofs of not having been obtained without considerable difficulty. Among the innumerable colours of all nations, I perceived, with pride, that there were only two or three english; and these, from their size, had belonged to some ship, perhaps to a merchantman, or to that man of war, which, after sharing the glories of Aboukir, was taken by five french vessels of the line, after a resistance no less honourable

than her former success. In the centre of this spacious apartment, to the right, surrounded by the trophies of his successors and countrymen, is placed the tomb of *Turenne*. This monument was removed to the Temple of Mars by the present government, and placed here, with considerable pomp, after having been saved from the fury of jacobinical rage, and preserved, by the care of *le Noir*, in the "*Musée des Monuments françois.*"

The circumstance which I have just mentioned, naturally leads me to speak of the last named institution, which I visited yesterday for the second time. On my arrival at Paris, I went to see *le Musée des Monuments françois*; and not being as much struck with the exhibition as I expected, from its great renown, I purposely postponed speaking of it, till I had had an opportunity of examining it again with all the attention it deserved. After several hours employed in this second view, I continue of my former opinion, that the spot*, in which these monuments are collected, is infinitely too small; that the garden, meant to be the tranquil site of sepulchral honours, and the calm retreat of departed grandeur, is on so limited a scale, is so surrounded with adjoining houses, and altogether so ill ar-

* Formerly a convent.

ranged, that, instead of presenting the model of

> "Those deep solitudes . . . . . .
> Where heav'nly pensive Contemplation dwells,
> And ever musing Melancholy reigns,"

it might easily be mistaken for the working yard of a statuary, or the pleasure ground of a tasteless citizen, decked out with Cupids, Mercuries, and Fauns.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that "*le Noir*," by whose care this establishment was formed, deserves great credit for the courage with which he rescued the many precious monuments here deposited, from the barbarous and undiscriminating fury of revolutionary vandalism, for the perseverance and attention which has marked his conduct in the arrangement, and for the plan (whether successful or not, I shall not pretend to examine) of presenting complete and exact representations of the art of building in the different ages. Among the innumerable tombs, crowded together in this collection, of which a catalogue, in large octavo, is sold at the door, I observed many of great beauty, taste, and symmetry. Kings, poets, *belles*, philosophers, and painters, torn from the graves, in which, for centuries past, their remains had tranquilly reposed, would have had no stone to record their past celebrity, if this institution had not existed

The arts, too, are highly indebted to the founder, for the specimens of sculpture, many of them *chef-d'œuvres*, which are here seen in all their original perfection. Models, too, of ancient and celtic buildings are added to those of french architecture.

Le Noir's favourite plan of having a chapel for each century, ornamented with all the appropriate decorations, and containing the tombs of contemporary persons, is in part executed, and three or four ages have already their respective temples, completed in the taste of the times which belonged to them These chapels have been much admired by persons, whose knowledge on such subjects entitle them to respect; and it would, therefore, be presumptuous in me to give a dissenting voice. I shall be pardoned, however, for remarking, that there appeared, in the whole arrangement, a kind of quackery, which prevented my feeling that unalloyed satisfaction which I had been led to expect; and that, in spite of my better judgment, I felt an inclination to laugh, when perhaps my tears ought to have flowed.

As every body must rejoice at the preservation of these monuments, whatever opinions he may entertain about the arrangement, I cannot help regretting, that they are not deposited in a place more worthy of containing them. Since the restoration of religion has removed every obstacle

which could be started to such a project, would it not be worthy of the present government, decidedly the friend and protector of the arts, to order that all these precious specimens of sculpture should become the ornament of one or more of the principal churches of Paris, the present naked state of which is an additional argument in favour of the measure? What splendour would they not both receive and confer, in being removed either to *Nôtre Dame*, *St. Sulpice*, or *St. Génévièvе*?

To satisfy the curiosity which I know you entertain on such subjects, I examined, with attention, the principal objects, and marked in my catalogue those which seemed most deserving of notice. The following is the list:

No. 5. The Tomb of Dagobert, with the figures of Nautilda his wife, and Clovis his son.

94. The Tomb of Lewis XII.

99. The Monument, or sepulchral Chapel, of Francis the First, with Claude his wife.—(Destroyed in the revolution, and restored by le Noir.)

105. Monument erected in honour of Ann of Montmorency.

111. A group of Graces.

113. Statue of Henry the Fourth of France, assassinated in 1610, clad in a military dress. The artist was *Francavilla*, or *Francevelle*, as he was otherwise called. The catalogue mentions, that judging from the body, found at St. Denys in

1793, and which was yet perfect, one should suppose that this was a striking likeness.

No. 115. Statue of *Claude Catherine de Clermont Tonnere.*

121. Statue in black marble, representing David after the death of Goliath, by *Peter Francavilla*, in 1580.

146. Monument erected in honour of *Charles the Fifth*, taken from *St. Germain-des-Prés.* His medallion, in bronze, is by John Cousin.

174. The Mausoleum of the *Cardinal de Richelieu*, taken from the *Sorbonne.*—This celebrated group of figures, after a design by *le Brun*, was executed by *Girardon*, and considered as his *chef-d'œuvre.*

187. The Mausoleum of *Cardinal Mazarin*, taken from the college of that name. This monument, of white marble, is the work of *Coyzevox.*

189. Statue of Ann of Austria, taken from the *Pont au Change.* Executed by *Guillain.*

200. Monument, erected to *John Baptiste Colbert*, the celebrated minister.

263. Monument, in marble, erected to the memory of *Charles le Brun*, one of the most celebrated painters of the french school. Taken from *St. Nicholas de Chardonnet.*

205. A group of Figures in black marble, representing *Frances Michael Letellier Marquis de Louvois*, minister of state, who died in 1691.—This was the work of *Girardon.*

207. This Monument, called *la Pyramide*, or the pillar of *Longueville*, was erected by *Anne Génévieve de Bourbon*, duchess of *Longueville*, and was meant in honour both of the first and second duke of that name.

No. 208. This is a Monument formed by *le Noir*, from the ruins of that which formerly stood in *la place des Victoires*. He has placed on the pedestal a figure of Abundance and Equality.

210. A colossal Statue, taken from *les Invalides*, representing *Charlemagne*. Executed by *Coyzevox*.

211. A colossal Statue of *Lewis the Eleventh*, in black marble, executed by *Couston*. Taken from *les Invalides*.

214. A Statue of *Lewis the Fourteenth*, in black marble, by *Michel Anguier*. The king is in a Roman dress.

218. A much admired Statue, by *Sarrasin*, of *St. Denys* praying. Taken from the abbey of *Montmartre*.

220 or 449. This fine Monument, executed under the immediate orders and design of the celebrated architect *Bullant*, was taken from *St. Martin*, at *Montmorency*, and was erected in honour of *Ann de Montmorency*.

286. The marble Bust of *Lewis de Bourbon Condé*, called the great *Condé*, from the chisel of *Coyzevox*.

384. This is a modern Monument, in honour of modern events, and of living characters. It is the work of *Foucon*, and it is meant to represent, allegorically, the peace of Luneville, and to record the glory of *Bonaparte*.

448. This is a beautiful Statue, in black marble, of *Francis the First* on his death bed. Two thousand modern goths, not content with mutilating this *chef-d'œuvre*, have ventured to record their barbarity in writing on the monument itself, or rather on what remains, their dishonoured names, several of which are still apparent. The convention afterwards found it necessary to pass a law, condemning to ten years imprisonment, in chains, the mutilators or destroyers of the works of art.

The following are in the garden:

No. 467. From the *Chateau d'Anet*, a beautiful group, representing Diana with a stag, accompanied by her dogs, *Procyon* and *Sirius*—supposed to be the work of *John Gougeon*, made for the fountain in the park of *Diana* of *Poitiers*, at *Anet*.

471. Statue, in black marble, and on his knees, of Lewis II. Taken from the church of *Nôtre Dame de Cléry*, where it was dreadfully mutilated by the fury of the inhabitants. It was the work of *Michael Bourdin*, of *Orleans*, who, not satisfied with the price which he received for it, stole a silver lamp from the church, for which crime he was afterwards executed at *Orleans*.

507. A sepulchral Urn, containing the ashes of the celebrated *René Descartes*, who died in Sweden, in the year 1650.

508. The Tomb of *Moliere*, containing the body of that celebrated dramatic writer. The following inscription appears:

" Moliere & Thalie reposent dans ce tombeau *."

The whole is surrounded with myrtles, roses, and cypress trees.

509. The Tomb of J. de la Fontaine, containing his body.

510. This is a Monument with four fronts. It contains the busts of *Moliere*, *John la Fontaine*, *Boileau*, and *Racine*, who were intimate friends, and sometimes lived together at *Auteuil*.

511. The Tomb which, for some time, contained the mummy of *Turenne*, first preserved in the *Musée de l'Histoire Naturelle*, then removed to this spot, and lastly placed, as I have before observed, in the Temple of Mars.

* Moliere and Thalia rest in this grave.

No. 555. Sepulchral Urn, containing the ashes of the celebrated *Boileau*, with this inscription:

" *Nicholas Boileau* est dans ce tombeau†."

And above:

" Ainsi que mes chagrins, mes beaux jours sont passés,
Je ne sens plus l'aigreur de ma bile première,
Et laisse aux froids rimeurs, une libre carrière†."

Boileau, Epist. 5. à M. *Guilléraques*.

There are, doubtless, besides those which I have enumerated, many statues deserving of notice; but I have specified these, on account of the celebrity of the artists, or that of the persons whose memory the monuments were intended to record. I send you a very imperfect account, yet it is the result of a six hours' visit, made with no little care and attention.

" *Le Noir's*" catalogue, which, I understand, is now translating into english, concludes with a curious account of the state in which the bodies of the former kings of France were found at *St. Denys*, when, in the year 1793, the national convention, with a savage disregard of decency, and with a contempt for departed grandeur scarcely credible, ordered that the kings, princes, and other great men, who had for fifteen hundred years lain in peace at *St. Denys*, should be dragged from their tombs, in order that the lead, of

* Nicholas Boileau is in this tomb.

† My cares, as well as my happy days, are past. I feel no longer the indignation of my youthful anger, and leave an open course to the tribe of dull and cold versificators.

which their coffins were made, should be converted into ball.

You will be surprised to hear, that the celebrated *Turenne*, preserved like a mummy, was instantly recognized by the resemblance which he still bore to his busts and pictures; and Henry the fourth was yet so perfect, (though he died in 1610), that not a feature was altered.

This account is already of such a length, that I shall make no apology for abruptly concluding it.

I am, &c.

POSTSCRIPT.

Returning home to day, at half past four o'clock, from viewing some of the sights, (which I have mentioned in my letter), we found a messenger waiting with a note from the *Thuilleries*. It proved to be an invitation to Mrs. ——, from the first consul, asking her to dinner the same day at five. She dressed as quickly as possible, and drove to the palace. She is just returned; and, from her statement, I send you the following short account.

The entertainment was extremely elegant, and the sight very striking. More than two hundred persons sat down to table in a splendid apartment. The company consisted, besides the family of Bonaparte, of the ministers, the ambassadors, several generals, senators, counsellors of state, and other constituted authorities. The number of women present was by no means in proportion to that of the men, and did not exceed fifteen. All the english ladies, who had been presented to madame Bonaparte, were invited (though not their husbands) to this entertainment; but it happened, that only two remained at Paris.

The dinner was served entirely on plate and *Sèvre china*, the latter bearing the letter B on every dish, and every plate; and the *plateau* was covered with moss, out of which arose innumerable natural flowers, the odour of which perfumed the whole room.

The first consul and madame Bonaparte conducted themselves with much ease, and spoke very affably to those around them.

The servants were numerous, splendidly dressed, and highly attentive. The dinner lasted more than two hours.

LETTER XXX.

General account of literary establishments at Paris.—National library.—Manuscripts.—Memoirs of his own times, by Lewis XIV.—*Fac simile* of a love letter of Henry IV.—Cabinet of medals.—Cabinet of engravings, &c.—Library of the Pantheon.—Mazarine library.—Library of the Institute.—Libraries of the senate, the legislative body, and tribunate.—The *Lycées*, now called *les Athénées*.—Admirable lectures given at one of them.—Professors *Fourcroy*, *Cuvier*, and *la Harpe*.—" L'Institute national."—" *Jardin national des Plantes*."—Collection of birds, plants, fossils, and insects, in the house attached to the " *Jardin des Plantes*."—" Cabinet de l'Ecole des Mines, *à l'Hôtel des Monnoies*.—Great opportunities afforded at Paris of cultivating science and literature in all their various branches.

Paris, may the 10th, 1802 (20 Floréal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE postponed speaking to you of the literary establishments of Paris, till my residence here had been sufficiently long to enable me to give my opinion with some degree of certainty.

Perhaps there is no town in the known world, which affords such favourable opportunities of acquiring and cultivating knowledge, as that from which I am now writing. On this subject, equality in the best sense exists; and while the poor man has the finest libraries, and most extensive collections opened to his use, without any expense whatever, he, whose circumstances are moderately easy, obtains, for a trifling consideration, every possible means of additional improvement.

The national library, which existed during the monarchy, and was founded by Charles the fifth, occupies a large building in the *rue de laLo i* (*ci-devant de Richelieu*). An elegant staircase, painted by Pelegrini, leads to the spacious apartments on the first floor, which take up three sides of the large court by which you enter, and which contain no less than three hundred thousand printed volumes. Five or six rooms, well lighted and well aired, offer on each side the best books, in every science and in every language. Tables are placed for the convenience of students, and attentive librarians civilly deliver the works which are asked for.

In the second room is a curious piece of workmanship, called " le Parnasse françois*", by *Titon Dutillet*, in which the different poets and writers of France are represented as climbing up the steep ascent of that difficult but inspired mountain. In my opinion, it deserves attention more as a specimen of national taste, and private industry, than as a production either of genius or of beauty.

In the third "*salon*" are the celebrated globes, the one celestial, the other terrestrial, made in 1683, by the jesuit *Coronelli*, for the *cardinal d'Estrées*. They are of immense dimensions, but require new painting; as, in the first place, they were made before the last discoveries, and se-

* French Parnassus.

condly, the colours are almost entirely effaced by the lapse of time.

This admirable library, which also contains collections of medals, and other curiosities, is open to all persons who choose to attend as students, without any expense, recommendation, or favour, every day in the week; but, to prevent the labours of these being interrupted, the visits of such as only come from motives of curiosity are limited to two days in seven. I saw, with pleasure, that the object of this splendid institution is fully answered. Forty or fifty young men, deeply intent on the subject of their inquiries, were seated in different parts of the room, and seemed to pursue, with enthusiasm, those studies, which the liberality of their country thus afforded them the means of cultivating.

The gallery of manuscripts (called the gallery of Mazarine) contains thirty thousand volumes, generally on the history of France, and more particularly relating to facts which have taken place since the reign of Lewis XI, twenty-five thousand of which are in learned or foreign languages. The librarian, to whose care these precious papers are entrusted, was known to a gentleman who accompanied me, and through his goodness we saw several, which are not commonly exhibited.

I was much surprised at finding, in the hand writing of *Lewis XIV*, memoirs of his own times, so accurately taken, that, with very little diffi-

culty, they might be prepared for the press. I understand that a gentleman, belonging to the library, began this useful task, and had made considerable progress, when a sudden illness deprived his country and the literary world of his services.

I was particularly entertained with the love letters of Henry IV, which are in perfect preservation, and some of which have, I believe, been published. The following is a *fac simile* of one, which particularly attracted my notice:

" Mon cher cœur, nous venons de dyner
céans, et sommes fort sous. Je
vous veyrie devant que partyr de Paris
vous cheyrie non comme yl
faut, mes comme je pourre
Ce porteur me haste sy fort que
je ne vous puys fay re que ce
mot bonsoyr le cœur a moy je
te bese un mylyon de foys
ce XIIIIIme octobre 8 H 8
8
HENRY *."

* The following is nearly the exact translation:

" My dear heart, we have just dined, and are very drunk. I will see you before I set out from Paris, and will caress you, not as you deserve, but as I can. The bearer hurries me so much, that I can only say this one word—good night, my dear heart, I kiss you a million of times.

This XIIIIIth october, 8 H 8
8
HENRY."

As the tokens of regard, which the gallant Henry thought his mistress deserved, were only limited in number to a million, we cannot too much admire the prudence with which he, who was never known to break his word, promised to testify his affection, not according to the merit of the lady, but to the powers of her lover.

The five large rooms on the second floor contain the titles and genealogies of private families, which, though forbidden, since the revolution, to be kept by individuals, are here preserved, in order to ascertain the claims of property, and to assist the researches of historians. They are contained in five thousand boxes, or *porte-feuilles*, and are arranged and labelled with the greatest precision.

The cabinet of medals is ornamented by drawings over the doors by *Boucher*; by three large pictures, by Natoire, representing Thalia, Calliope, and Terpsichore; by three of Carlo Vanloo, representing *Psyche* led by Hymen, the inventress of the flute, and the three protectors of the Muses. The cabinet of antiques, above stairs, contains the busts, vases, inscriptions, instruments of sacrifice, &c. collected by the celebrated *Caylus*.

The cabinet of engravings, which occupies what is called, in France, the "entresol," or the floor between the first and second, consists of five thousand volumes, divided into twelve classes.

The first contains sculptors, architects, engineers, and engravers, arranged in schools. The second, prints, emblems, and devices of piety. The third, greek and roman fables and antiquities. The fourth, medals, coins, and arms. The fifth, public festivals, cavalcades, and tournaments. The sixth, arts and mathematics. The seventh, prints relating to romances and works of pleasantry. The eighth, natural history in all its branches. The ninth, geography. The tenth, plans and views of ancient and modern edifices. The eleventh, portraits of persons, of all conditions, to the number of fifty thousand; and the twelfth, a collection of fashions and *costumes* of almost every country in the world, from the *porte-feuille* of *Gaignières*. This last class is said to contain the most extensive collection yet known of french fashions, from the time of Clovis to the present age. The greater part of the sheets are coloured, some are on vellum, copied from glass windows, from pieces of tapestry, and from figures on tombs. The picture of king John, being the first specimen of french painting, is found in this collection. It is well preserved.

I ought not to conclude my account of the national library without mentioning, that among the manuscripts there are several in the persian, arabic, and chinese languages.

Besides the "national library," there is the library of the Pantheon (or St. Génévière), con-

sisting of eighty thousand volumes, and two thousand manuscripts, open every day from ten till two o'clock.

The Mazarine library, or ("des quatre nations,") is open every day, from ten till two o'clock (excepting on the 5th and 10th of each month), and contains sixty thousand volumes.

The library of the "Institute" is open every day to members, and every 15th of the month to the public.

The legislature, the tribunate, the senate, and the other constituted authorities, have also their libraries.

In addition to these sources of knowledge, there are several literary institutions, called, when I first came here, "*des Lycées*, or *Lyceums*, but which, in consequence of the national colleges lately established having taken that name, have changed theirs, and assumed the appellation of "*des Athénées*." The most distinguished of these, "le Lycée," (or, according to its new title, "l'Athénée,"), "republicain," has been the principal source of my amusement at Paris. It consists of annual subscribers, who, for the moderate sum of four *louis*, enjoy all its benefits. The society has a large floor, or apartment, situate near the "Palais Royal," (in a street called by its name); and it is open the whole of every day for the use of the subscribers. There is a small library, where all the periodical pub-

lications and newspapers are taken in; and while three or four rooms are appropriated to conversation, one is devoted to reading, and profound silence is there ordered and maintained. In addition to these, there is an excellent lecture room, with all the necessary apparatus for experiments, in which the ablest men in France appear as professors. The subject of the lectures, which are regularly given, always twice, and frequently three times, in the course of the day, are literature, the sciences, and modern languages. When I add, that *Fourcroy* takes the chymical department, that *Cuvier* reads on natural history, and that *la Harpe*, till banished by the government, was the professor of literature, you will readily allow, that no establishment can be better organized. Besides these, "*Hassenfratz*" gives very good lectures on agriculture, and the studies connected with that science. "*Sué*," as an anatomist, is justly celebrated; and the other professors, in their different lines, prove themselves well qualified for the tasks assigned them. With "*Fourcroy*," and "*Cuvier*," I was particularly delighted; and it is impossible, without having heard them, to form an idea of the clearness and eloquence with which they explain the subjects of their respective departments. As to "*la Harpe*," I must confess, I was not a little disappointed. From his great renown, and from the encomiums past on

him, in early life, by *Voltaire*, I expected to have been at once pleased, instructed, and surprised. In these hopes I was strongly encouraged by the manner in which his lectures were spoken of at Paris, and by the crowds which flocked to the "*Lycée*," whenever it was his turn to fill the chair. Dreadful was my disappointment, when, at last, I heard him. *Perpignan*, *la Motte*, *Fontenelle*, and some other authors of that stamp, were the subjects of his discourses; and, beginning with telling us that these writers were either entirely forgotten, or deserved to be so, he continued, for whole days together, to drag their ghosts before his audience, whom he seemed to convert into a "*tribunal révolutitionaire*" of criticism, and to attack their memory with all the warmth and violence of an "*accusateur publique.*" These philippics against dead and neglected authors, filled up with long quotations from the works which he ridiculed, interlarded with attacks on those philosophical and political principles of which he was originally the ardent advocate, and enlivened now and then with a joke, and sometimes with an anecdote, constituted the whole merit of his lectures. Yet the members of the "*Lycée*" heard him with wonder and admiration; and whenever he threw down his book, turned round with a look of self-complacence, or filled his tumbler with

lemonade from the decanter always placed by his side, the signal was instantly taken, and loud and repeated applauses thundered from every corner of the room. To account for this partiality, I must repeat, that every thing at Paris is ruled by fashion; and *la Harpe* being generally considered as the most distinguished literary man now alive, every thing which fell from his tongue was necessarily excellent; and I have no doubt, that if he had contented himself with reading an article from one of the newspapers of the morning, he would have been equally admired, and as warmly applauded.

The "*Lycée*" is altogether a most excellent establishment; and, considering that two lectures, and frequently three, are given six days in every week, and that these lectures are included in the subscription, the price of four louis is very moderate.

I cannot speak properly of this institution as a place of society, as I seldom staid there after the conclusion of the lectures; but I am told, that the members are, generally speaking, respectable men. The rooms are constantly full, and some persons may be said nearly to pass their lives there, since they are scarcely ever absent, except at the hour of dinner. I think it not improbable, that much amusement may be found in the conversation of the members; but I

confine my recommendation to the advantages which the "*Lycée*" affords, as an easy source of profitable knowledge.

"*L'Institut national,*" that celebrated society, which has succeeded "*l'académie française,*" which is held up as the great republican repository of genius and learning, and into which admittance is solicited with so much eagerness, both at home and abroad, consists of one hundred and forty-four members resident at Paris, and of twenty-four foreign associates. It is divided into three classes; the sciences, physical and mathematical; the sciences, moral and political; literature and the fine arts. Each of these classes is again subdivided.

The "*Institut*" has a public séance, or meeting, on the 15th of every month. I was present at one of these assemblies; and I am ashamed to confess, that I had difficulty in refraining from laughter. The society holds its sittings in a spacious room in the palace of the *Louvre.* The members were seated in such silent, solemn state, each with his reading desk, books, ink, and wax lights before him, while a dull and uninteresting paper was reading, that their gravity produced the opposite effect on me, and "*malgré*" my respect for the establishment, and for those who belong to it, it was not without a struggle that I composed my features, and checked the impulse of nature. At last, fortunately for me, "*Callot*

d'Herville," a dramatic writer of merit, ascended the rostrum, and read a kind of funeral oration, or eulogy, on the memory of an author of reputation, lately dead. The simplicity of the speaker's manner, the harmony of his voice, and the feeling which he displayed, in deploring the loss and proving the worth of his friend, charmed every ear; and, notwithstanding the pompous faces which surrounded me, I became as melancholy as they wished to appear serious. The members of "l'institute national" wear a blue cloth uniform, richly embroidered with silk of the same colour.

The "*Jardin national des Plantes**," founded originally by Buffon, is one of the most interesting objects at Paris. Naturalists, and persons fond of botany, have here every opportunity of cultivating those useful studies, and of gratifying, in the amplest manner, their favourite taste. The garden itself, which is extensive, and reaches to the river, contains every kind of curious and exotic plant. There is a greenhouse likewise, filled with such trees, the tender nature of which cannot bear the coldness of a northern atmosphere.

There is also a *ménagerie*, or collection of animals, among which every kind of fierce, rare, and foreign quadrupeds may be found. On my first arrival at Paris, there were two elephants,

* The national garden of plants.

of different sizes, who had lived several years together in the same stable. They were of very considerable dimensions, equal to those, the effigy of which is sometimes seen on a London stage. The male has lately died, and "*Cuvier*" is to anatomize the body, and give a lecture on the subject. The female, for some time after the death of her companion, showed evident symptoms of grief, and even refused, at first, every kind of nourishment. The house attached to "le Jardin des Plantes" is filled with a precious collection of curiosities in natural history, properly arranged, and correctly named. Several rooms are filled with these valuable objects; and I am told, by persons acquainted with such subjects, that very little is wanting to make this *dépôt* complete. Stuffed quadrupeds *, birds, plants, fossils, fish, and shells, offer every kind of variety; and even the ignorant man finds here a source of never-failing amusement. The collection of insects is particularly curious and extensive. I believe it is considered as the finest in the world.

The "*Jardin des Plantes,*" like every other national establishment at Paris, is seen gratuitously, and is open to foreigners every day, while frenchmen are only admitted three or four times

* Among the curious quadrupeds here preserved is the *Camelopardalis. Vide Vaillant's Travels in Africa.*

in each week. It is impossible to mention too often, or to admire too highly, a *trait* of hospitality so truly magnificent.

The "cabinet *de l'Ecole des Mines*" is a superb establishment. It is situate in the principal building towards the key of the "*hôtel des Monnaies.*" It was formed in 1778, of the collection which the famous mineralogist, le Sage, was eighteen years in putting together. The middle of the cabinet forms an amphitheatre, capable of containing two hundred persons. Glass cases enclose, in the finest order, minerals of every kind, and from every part of the world. Four other separate cases offer models of machinery. On the stairs, leading to the gallery, is the bust of monsieur le Sage, which was placed there by the gratitude of his pupils. The gallery itself is surrounded with cases, containing specimens of the productions of mines, too numerous to be placed with those which are in the first cabinet of mines. The interior of the cabinet is 45 feet long, by 38 wide, and 40 feet high. All the english, who have seen "*l'Ecole des Mines,*" agree, in speaking of it as one of the most interesting sights of this interesting capital*.

* I do not mention *l'Ecole Polytechnique*, that admirable institution, in which eight hundred young men, named by the government (principally as a reward for the services of their fathers), are liberally educated, because it forms part of the system of public instruction, which, being of a political

Beside the great establishments which I have mentioned, there are several others, which it would be an endless task to attempt to specify.

There are also many "lycées" or "athenées," beside that of which I have spoken. There are likewise private subscription lectures on all subjects, many of which are of high repute, such as those of Mr. Charles on natural philosophy of the excellence of whose experiments, and the clearness of whose discourses, I hear a very favourable account.

The english, german, and italian languages, are taught by professors at the different "lycées," by particular subscription, and for moderate sums in other places. In short, there is no literary pursuit, of any kind, which any man, in any circumstances, may not cultivate with success at Paris.

Fortitude is necessary to resist the opportunities of committing crimes, if the individual be poor, and of falling into the temptations of pleasure, if he happen to be rich. Guarded against these respective evils, the industrious scholar, whether covered with rags, or "clad every day in purple," may move on in the career of letters with every possible advantage, and with the cer-

nature, is foreign to my object. In this letter I only mean to point out those establishments, from which foreigners can derive either information or pleasure.

titude of, at last, obtaining the utmost object of his wishes. If any equality exist in France, it is found in the fount of knowledge, which literally

"—— In patriam populumque fluxit."

In addition to the opportunities afforded for literary improvement already mentioned, the price of books is moderate; and "*cabinets litéraires*" offer in every quarter of the town, and almost in every street, newspapers, pamphlets, and periodical works.

Paris, however, does not possess many circulating libraries, and of the few which exist, I can give no favourable account. Perhaps the facility with which works of value are consulted, and the trifle for which those of the day are bought, are the reasons of this deficiency. It is, however, a considerable convenience wanting in so great a city; and I think that such an establishment, on a liberal and extended scale, would be a profitable and useful subject of speculation.

I have said nothing of "la Société des belles Lettres, of "*la Société de Médecine*," of "*la Société d'Institution*," &c. Were I to enumerate all the useful establishments, both public and private, connected with literature, my letter would soon be swelled into a volume, and that even of no small dimensions. I shall, therefore, now conclude my account by observing, that whatever are the particular objects, to which a

studious man wishes to direct his attention, "quod petit hic est," he will find here all the facilities which he can possibly desire for pursuing his favourite science, with little or no expense and great advantage.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

Calculation and estimate of expenses at Paris.—List of hotels, traiteurs, &c.

Paris, may the 12th, 1802, (22 floréal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU know how much I dislike the petty detail of economical arrangements, and will therefore pardon me for having so long delayed to speak to you of the expenses and mode of living at Paris. I have not forgotten your queries, and will, in this letter, endeavour to answer them as fully as possible. You will, at least, derive one advantage from my apparent neglect; that the information which I shall now send you, is not hastily given, but the result of experience, gained during a residence of nearly seven months.

Persons who have represented Paris (to use a vulgar phrase) as a cheap place, have either been greatly deceived themselves, or have intended purposely to deceive. The difference between the expense of living in London and in Paris, appears to me infinitely less than it is generally supposed. It is true, indeed, that a french family will apparently support a much more elegant establishment on a given income, than an english one can in London; but I believe

the cause arises almost entirely from the superiour economy and arrangement of the former, from the sparing system observed in the interiour of private houses, and from the constant and unvarying attention to the *minutiæ* of every disbursement. Though the table of a Parisian boasts, when company are invited, every kind of luxury, yet I have reason to suspect, that, on ordinary occasions, "le bouilli*," and "le vin ordinaire," form its principal support. A carriage, which has been in a family twenty or thirty years, is treated with all the respect due to its antiquity, and is seldom or ever discarded on account of its oldfashioned shape or faded colour; and horses, used only now and then, may be fed on hay and straw. Liveries are forbidden by the law; and servants are therefore permitted to wait in the tattered garments which their present master has left off, or in those which they have collected in a former service.

The drawing-rooms, and "*salles à manger*," are lighted, even at the largest assemblies, with oil, instead of wax; and antichambers and staircases are so dark, that to find one's way into the principal apartment is generally a service of

* The boiled beef, which, after making the soup, is always served at a french table. "Le vin ordinaire," or common wine, is a weak, sour beverage, which costs about sixpence english per bottle, and is not, either in taste or strength, superiour to our small beer.

difficulty, if not of danger. As to fire, on common occasions, one in the bed room either of "madame," or "monsieur," is thought sufficient, with the addition of a "poële," or stove, which is so contrived, as to heat both the eating room, and the antichamber, in which latter the servants always sit. In respect to dress, an old great coat (or "riding coat," as they call it) is often worn in the house, by gentlemen, and the *belles* who appear with the greatest splendour in the evening, sometimes pass their morning in a powdering gown, or "*robe de chambre.*"

The same kind of rigid economy is observed in their amusements. A family of distinction will occupy a box "*au second*, or *au bénoir* *, to save a few *livres;* and I knew a young lady of considerable fortune, who expressed an anxious wish to see the first appearance of *Vestris*, and who, when a place was offered her, refused it, *malgré* the general passion for *spectacles*, and the celebrity of this, when she found that the price of the ticket was nine francs (or seven and sixpence english). I have entered into this explanation, to account for the apparently splendid establishments of persons of moderate fortunes, which might otherwise seem to contradict the opinion which I

* The boxes "au bénoir" are on the level with the pit, under the first tier, and are in the shape of a bath, from which they take their name.

am about to give, and which I have already hinted.

I repeat, then, that an english family settling here*, with english ideas and english habits, would spend very little less than they would do in London, with a similar establishment.

To enable you to judge for yourself on this subject, I shall mention the prices of the most essential articles of expense; some of which are lower, while others are infinitely higher.

Meat is much cheaper, being only eleven or twelve sols per pound (or five or six pence english).

Bread bears, at present, nearly the same price in the two countries.

The keep of horses costs infinitely less at Paris, than in London.

Poultry is cheaper; and wine of the best kind may be bought for something more than we pay for good port.

On the other hand, house rent is equally dear, if not dearer. Furniture is exorbitant; and dress of all kinds, both for men and women (only excepting shoes and gloves) is, beyond com-

* Persons going to France ought to know, that, the exchange being at present against England, we regularly lose from *five* to *seven* per cent on the money drawn from the latter country. This loss must of course be added to the calculation of expenses on the continent.

parison, dearer in price, and more expensive in its kind.

The price of amusements, in the first places, is nearly the same at the large theatres of Paris, as at those of London; and *spectacles*, being infinitely more frequented at the former than in the latter city, much more is spent, in this article, in the one than in the other capital.

Groceries are dearer, and fuel at least double. Putting these articles, the one against the other, perhaps with economy eleven hundred pounds in Paris might purchase as many conveniencies as twelve in London. But I think even this difference is liberally allowed.

Having given this rough calculation of family expenses, I shall proceed to speak more particularly of those of a foreigner, or temporary resident. On this point I can be more positive, having experience for my guide.

A job carriage and pair of horses cost from twenty to twenty two louis per month, according to the manner in which you are served. A pair of horses, without the hire of a carriage, may be had for fifteen or sixteen louis per month. In both cases the coachman is paid by the jobman; but the former expects a trifle, as a mark of your approbation.

A "*laquais de place*" asks four, but will take three, livres (or half a crown English) per day.

Apartments vary so infinitely in price, according to the part of the town where they are situate, according to the number of rooms wanted, according to the height of the floor, and, above all, according to the bargain made by the individual wanting them, that it is very difficult to fix any think like an average. I shall only say, generally, that I think a single man may be well lodged (at a price proportioned to the accommodation which he requires) from five to twelve louis per month; and a family of two or three persons, with as many servants, from twelve to thirty louis.

A "*traiteur*" will supply a dinner at six livres (or five shillings) per head; but the fare will neither be very good, nor very abundant.

Wine, of the best quality, if taken from the "*traiteur*," or the master of the hotel, will cost from five to six *livres* the bottle. The same may be had from a wine merchant at about half the price. I ought to add, that it is not expected here, as in England, that the wine should necessarily be ordered from the person who supplies your table.

The price of washing is greater than in London; and the english ladies complain much of the manner in which it is executed.

Fuel is immensely dear. A "voie de bois," or load of wood, the contents of which one fire will consume in ten days, costs about thirty two

or thirty three livres (making about twenty six or twenty seven shillings english.)

About nine livres (or seven shillings and sixpence) are paid for admittance in the first places for each person at the "opera," at "le théâtre de la Feydeau," and at "le théâtre de la rue Favart; at the "théâtre françois" six livres, twelve sols, (or five shillings and sixpence english) and in the little theatres, half a crown, or three shillings. I cannot give the prices exactly, as they vary according to the manner in which you go to the play-house. In taking a box, more is paid for each ticket, than what is otherwise paid simply for the admittance, at the door, of each individual.

Clothing is very expensive. A plain frock of superfine cloth costs from four louis to five and a half, according to the fashion of the tailor: and I am told, that ladies' muslins are at least four times dearer than in London.

About lodgings, it is very necessary that those, who intend visiting Paris should make previous arrangements. The hotels are not so numerous as before the revolution; and the difficulty of getting well accommodated is much greater than any one, who has not been here, can possibly conceive. Great advantage is also taken of the situation of strangers, who arrive (unprepared) at one of these houses with post horses, the drivers of which are always impatient, and very

often impertinent, if you detain them long in seeing rooms, or go to several hotels, before you are settled.

To enable you and your friends to form some idea of the merits of the different hotels, and accordingly to give directions to your correspondents, I will add a list and short account of the most celebrated.

" L'Hôtel de Grange Batelière, rue de Grange Batelière," in the Chaussée Dantin, (where Lord Cornwallis lodged) is a large and spacious house, in which there are many handsome apartments. It has also the advantage of a fine and extensive garden. I think I have heard, that the charges here are rather high. The situation of the house is excellent; adjoining the Boulevard, nearly opposite " *la rue de la Loi* (or *de Richelieu*)," and in that part of the town, which is now esteemed the most fashionable.

" L'Hôtel de l' Empire," rue Cerruti, (formerly the private house of M. *la Borde*, the king's Banker) is much frequented by the english. It is of course expensive. The high reputation which this hotel enjoys, induced me to go there on my first arrival. I was much disappointed. I did not find either the lodgings good, or the cooking very superiour. The principal apartment is certainly very splendid, the price of which is ninety louis per month; but the other rooms have nothing very particular to recom-

mend them. Every kind of refreshment is found in the house, and charged by the article, as at the hotels in London, and at about the same prices.

This house is also in the "Chaussée Dantin," and not far distant from "l' Hôtel de Grange Batelière."

In the "rue de la Loi," (or "de Richelieu") there are several hotels; but the situation, though extremely central and convenient, has the disadvantage of being very noisy. The upper part of the street, near the Boulevard, is the most agreeable; and in that position are "l' Hôtel de l' Europe," and "l' Hôtel des Etrangers." They appear good houses. I know nothing of their character.

"L' Hôtel d' Angleterre, rue des Filles de St. Thomas," very near the "rue de la Loi," has been inhabited by several English this winter. The charges are said to be expensive. The situation is convenient; but it is noisy, and surrounded by houses.

"L' Hôtel des Etrangers, rue Vivienne," very near the "rue de la Loi," and the "Palais Royal," is also in the centre of the town. This house I have heard more generally commended by those who have lodged there, as to its prices, accommodations, and kitchen, than any other at Paris; but I cannot say, I like the street where it stands, which is both close and dirty.

"*L' Hôtel de Mirabeau, rue de Helder,*" is in a new street, near the Boulevard. It seems a good house. I do not know its character.

The two hotels, the situation of which is the most agreeable, being both near the Boulevard, the Thuilleries, and the Champs Elisées, are "*l' Hôtel de Courlande, place Louis XV,* (or *de la Concorde*"), and *l' Hôtel des Etrangers, rue Royale* (or *de la Concorde.*") The former is part of that fine building, the "Garde Meuble," and stands in the most beautiful "*place,*" or square, of Paris. The windows command a delightful view of the "*place,*" the bridge, the river, the *Thuilleries,* and *Champs Elisées.* The house is newly furnished, and only lately opened. I am sorry to add, that it consists but of few apartments; but those which there are, are elegant and spacious. The prices are extremely high. I was asked forty *louis* a month for a second floor.

The other house, I mean "*l' Hôtel des Etrangers, rue Royale* (or *de la Concorde*)" standing in a very wide street, which runs from the Boulevard to "la place Louis XV," has equal advantages as to the neighbourhood of all the public walks, with the hotel of which I spoke last; but it does not command the same view. I am forced also to mention, having lived two months in the house, that the landlord is a very

insolent fellow, and his wife, if possible, more impertinent than himself.

There are three small hotels, called, "*l' Hôtel de Galle*," "*l' Hôtel des Quinz Vingts*," and "*l' Hôtel de Carousel*," all in the immediate neighbourhood of the palace of the Thuilleries, of which each commands a view. A single man would be agreeably lodged at one of these; but I should not suppose, that there was sufficient accommodation at either for a family consisting of several persons.

In the "*Fauxbourg St. Germain*," the hotels formerly frequented by the english either exist no more, or have lost their reputation. Those only which are of any repute in this part of the town, seem to be "*l' Hôtel de Rome, rue St. Dominique*," where there are several handsome apartments, more remarkable for their size than their cleanliness; and "*l' Hôtel de Marengo*," in the same street, and next door to the former. The lodgings of the latter are good; but some friends of mine, who lived there, complained much of the disagreeable state, in which they found the beds. Both these hotels have good gardens.

"*L' Hôtel de Caramont*," in the same street, belonging to the *ci-devant comte* of that name, though not an "*hôtel garni*," is let in apartments, the greater part of which were occupied

first by Mr. Jackson, and afterwards by Mr. Merry. The rooms are delightful; but it rarely happens, that any are vacant. I forgot to mention, that there is also in this street a small hotel, called, "*l' Hôtel de Jura*," which is well furnished, and has a pretty garden.

The houses, which I have enumerated, are those which are the most known, the best situate, and the most esteemed. Beside these, there are "*l' Hôtel de Vauban*," "*l' Hôtel de Congrès*," and "*l'Hôtel de la Grand Bretagne*, all situate in "*la rue St. Honoré*," and said to be respectable houses. For those also who do not object to be surrounded with bustle and noise, "*l' Hotel de la Chancellerie*," near the "Palais Royal," will offer good accommodations. I am told, the apartments there are uncommonly elegant, and extremely spacious*.

To this account I must add a *negative* recommendation of *la rue Traversière*, in which there are several hotels, and into which the windows of some in *la rue de la Loi* also look. A perpetual

* I have heard, since I left Paris, that a very fine house, formerly belonging to a nobleman, and known by the name of "*l' Hôtel de Beauveau*," has lately been opened as an "*hôtel garni*," and assumed the title of "*Hôtel de Prince de Galle*." It stands in "*la Rue Fauxbourg St. Honoré*," nearly fronting one of the avenues to the *Champs Elisées*. In spring the situation must be very pleasant. It is at a considerable distance from the theatres, but in a most respectable part of the town.

market, with all the attendant smells, renders the houses in "la rue Traversière extremely unpleasant; and the same reason obstructs the passage, so that is difficult, in a carriage, to find one's way to any door in this street. The caution is the more necessary, as postboys frequently recommend the situation.

There is some objection to almost every hotel; I cannot, therefore, recommend any one; but, were I to visit Paris again, I think I should either try "*l' Hôtel de Courlande, place Louis XV*," the situation of which is incomparable; "*l'Hôtel de Grange Batelière*," which, in accommodations and size, is superiour to any house of the same kind; or "*l' Hôtel des Etrangers, rue Vivienne*," which is universally well spoken of by those who have inhabited it.

As to the "traiteurs," or persons who supply you with dinners, they sometimes belong to the house where you lodge, and sometimes not.

I tried several during my stay at Paris, and I found them all so bad, and so uncertain, that, were I to return, I would either hire a cook, or dine constantly at the house of a "restaurateur*." The most celebrated are, *Naudit*, and *Robert*, in the Palais Royal, *Beauvillier* in the *rue de la Loi*, and *Verry* in the garden of the *Thuilleries*. Besides the public room,

* "*Restaurateurs*" are tavern keepers, where dinners are served.

which is always elegantly ornamented, there is, at each of these places, several *small rooms*, or *cabinets*, for private parties. A long bill of fare, called "la carte," consisting of all the delicacies of the season, and every variety of wine, with the prices affixed to each article, is handed to you, and the dishes are no sooner named, than they are instantly served. The apartments are tastefully decorated, the linen and plate are particularly clean, and the waiters civil, attentive, and well dressed. The cooking is incomparable. Ladies, as well as gentlemen, dine at these houses, and even in the public room several of the former are always present. On a rough calculation, the expense of dining at one of the first *restaurateurs*, including a fair quantity of the best wine, varies from twelve livres (ten shillings) to a louis each person.

There are, however, inferiour houses of this kind, where, even for *trent-six sols* (or eighteen pence english) a dinner of several dishes, and a bottle of wine, are allowed. As I never tried one of these economical *repas*, I cannot speak of the fare they afford. A returned "*abbé*" assured me, that he dined in this manner "*à merveille;*" but, notwithstanding his authority, I should scarcely recommend a hungry englishman to make the experiment.

In concluding my account of hotels and *traiteurs*, I must repeat my advice to you, to

make a previous bargain for whatever you may want. In Paris, no tradesman has a settled price; and shopkeeper or landlord, who has the most respectable appearance, is not to be trusted.

An englishman, who, from delicacy, omits to offer a smaller sum than that which is asked, may be certain, that he makes a present of at least fifty per cent to the person of whom he purchases. In every line of trade the same system is pursued; and even in buying books and plate, I have known one fourth of the original demand taken.

Strangers ought to be particularly careful, how they deal with the "marchands" of the "hôtel garni" where they lodge. They are a tribe of people, who, under the recommendation of the landlord or porter, to whom they pay a regular commission at the expense of the traveller, knock perpetually at his door, and, with the utmost importunity, insist on showing the different articles of their trade. What they sell is always dear, generally out of fashion, and frequently damaged.

In calculating the expenses of Paris, much will depend on the manner in which an individual lays out his money; and I am certain, that if a good manager and a thoughtless young man were, during a winter passed in Paris, to order exactly the same articles, and were afterwards to compare their disbursements, a differ-

ence would appear in the result, of nearly one half. It must be remembered also, that "*milord anglais*" (as they call every englishman) is supposed to be so very rich, and so lavish of his treasures, that he is rather flattered than offended by the largeness of the sums which he is called upon to pay; and, while a conscientious tradesman is satisfied with asking of another foreigner about forty or fifty per cent beyond the value of his goods, he fails not to demand double of him, whom, by his accent, he discovers to be a native of that happy island, in which frenchmen believe, that gold is as common as the air we breathe.

With these remarks, thrown out as a necessary caution, I shall conclude my subject; and, meaning to write to you once again, before I leave Paris, I shall, for the present, bid you adieu.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

General view of Paris, principally taken as compared with London.

Paris, may the 14th, 1802 (24 floréal.)

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING in my former letters endeavoured to give you some idea of the particular objects of greatest curiosity, I shall, in this last, take a general view of Paris, principally as compared with London.

I shall begin with remarking, that of all the foreigners of different nations, who frequent this city, the english are those who are least satisfied with its pleasures, its occupations, and its manners. For this many reasons may be assigned. The nations of the continent have, in the first place, in their mode of living, a kind of general resemblance, which qualifies them more for domesticating (if I may be permitted the expression) in a country not their own than we have. A german, an italian, a russian, or a swede has been accustomed at home to the french kitchen, or at least to a bad imitation of its dishes: his habits, his fashions, and even his literary pursuits have been formed on the model of the french: and if he has lived in a court, the french language has also

been, from infancy, as familiar to him as his own. Very different is the situation of an englishman. He finds himself, on landing at Calais, in a new world, and in all the ordinary occurrences of life, his habits are to be fresh modelled.

The cleanliness, so generally prevalent in England, not only in private houses but likewise in inns, taverns, and hotels, is seldom met with on the continent, and it is necessary for the traveller to lay aside his best customs, and most excusable prejudices, before he can become tolerably easy.

To breakfast and dine in a bedroom, to eat with the same knife of every article, to have the bed made by a man, and other indelicacies too gross to mention, are little misfortunes to which an english gentleman submits with regret, and a lady with real pain. The numerous but scanty dishes which crowd a french table, among which a joint of plain roasted meat seldom appears, cloy without satisfying the appetite of those who have been used to simpler but more substantial food. The wine, also, notwithstanding its high repute, seldom seems strong enough or of sufficient body for such as are habitual drinkers of port, though, when the latter has been for some time discontinued, the taste becomes disagreeable. The familiarity of servants and waiters (though less than before the revolution), is still disgusting and offensive. The necessity of bargaining, even at the most respetcable shops, for the com-

monest articles of merchandise, renders the purchase of them very unpleasant. These circumstances, however trifling, occur too frequently in the course of every day, not to have a considerable effect on the *serenity of John Bull.* Accustomed only to his own language, he is either totally ignorant of the french, or speaks it with difficulty, hesitation, and fear. He is tormented with the frequent visits *, which he is expected

* Visits.—It is the custom, in all parts of France, and particularly at Paris, to receive and pay perpetual visits. The whole of every evening is passed in a *routine* of this kind (when the *spectacle* offers no irresistible temptation); and a parisian *belle* was, the other day, quite astonished and disgusted, when I told her, that in England ladies seldom received the visit of young men—"*Qu'elle vie ennuyeuse que votre vie de Londres!*" exclaimed the fair one; "*qu'on doit passer des tristes journées!* Que peut elle faire, une malheureuse anglaise, après dîner?"

"Elle va aux assemblées ou à l'opera—Mais si elle est malade?

"Elle reste chez elle."

"*Quoi* toute seule! que *vos dames sont à plaindre!* Que *je me félicite d'être françoise! Sans les visites de quelques amis choisis, je mourrois d'ennui.*"

What a dull life must your english manners afford! What dismal days must one pass in such a country! What can a poor english lady do after dinner?

She goes to assemblies, or to the opera.

But if she is ill—

She stays at home.

What quite alone? Oh, how I pity your poor english ladies! Oh, how I rejoice at being born a frenchwoman!

to pay; and the custom of leaving the table immediately after dinner, seldom allowing time for more than one or two glasses of good wine, completely destroys the original good nature of his character.

I have recapitulated these little distresses, as I am convinced they sour the temper, and have a considerable influence on the unfavourable judgment often pronounced by my countrymen. I do not pretend myself to be superiour to such weaknesses, and mention the circumstance, that too implicit credit may not be given to the opinions of one capable of being biassed by "trifles light as air." I must be permitted, however, to observe, that there are reasons of a much more serious nature, which make the english less easy to please than other foreigners. We come from a country, where all the arts are carried to a degree of perfection, at least equal to what is attained on the same objects in France, and where, in many things, the ingenuity of our ma-

without the visits of a few well chosen friends I should die of *ennui*.

Notwithstanding this passion for receiving and returning visits among one and another, the french are frequently negligent in this respect towards the foreigners who are recommended to them. I have heard english ladies at Paris complain, that their visits were often not returned at all, and that early attention was rarely shown as to this little *etiquette*, which well bred persons in England are so careful to observe.

nufacturers is unrivalled. In science and literature we have not been compelled to look from home; and while we now admire the many distinguished writers which France has produced, they are not our only models, and with Locke and Newton, Milton and Shakspeare, we cannot pay that unbounded homage to the genius and learning of our neighbours, which they are apt to demand. The freedom and excellence of our constitution accustoms us to a degree of unrestrained conversation, seldom met with at Paris; and the general diffusion of wealth in London, has introduced, among all orders, a degree of comfort which is seldom found even in the proudest houses of the french capital.

The beauty of our women, and the delicacy of their behaviour, render us less enthusiastic admirers of parisian belles, and parisian fashions, than the strangers of other countries.

The perfection to which the stage has advanced in London, and the splendid manner in which our theatres are lighted, prevent our being greatly struck with the renowned *spectacles* of this place; and the taste, profusion, and magnificence, displayed in our private entertainments, oppose too powerful a contrast to the gayeties of Paris, to allow us to be much delighted with the latter. Our race of horses, and our manufacture of carriages, are both too perfect to render it possible for us to admire the wretched equipages,

which are here considered as the *acme* of elegance. It is equally impossible for us to praise the gardens of the *Thuilleries*, the Champs Elisées, or the *Bois de Boulogne*, as long as we remember Hyde park or Kensington gardens. Nor can the lighting and paving of Paris excite the admiration of those who have been used to the comfortable *trottoir* and brilliant lamps of the streets of London.

Having thus stated the reasons, good and bad, for the tameness with which englishmen often speak of Paris, I shall endeavour to divest myself, as much as possible, of national prejudice, and to lay before you the advantages and disadvantages attendant on a residence in this city.

In respect to literature, the arts and sciences, certainly every opportunity is offered which knowledge can afford, or which a zeal for letters can desire. In this respect, I think, Paris is superiour to London. Besides the immense acquisitions which it has lately made, and the great and wonderful collections that are constantly open to the public, there are so many private institutions within the reach of men of moderate fortune, that this city would soon rival all the universities of Europe, did not the pleasures of the place hold out temptations dangerous to the morals of youth.

Literary men also are more respected than in England; and, instead of abandoning society

(which is too much the case with men of learning in our country), the industrious, but unprotected frenchman, who engages in the career of letters, finds his way into the most brilliant circles of the capital. Even the haughtiest of the old nobility admit into their most intimate *coteries*, those who have attained any literary fame, however low their origin, or however mean their appearance. On this head, I give unqualified and unrivalled praise to Paris.

Whether a foreigner could profitably pursue any commercial speculation here, it is not for me to inquire. I shall only observe, that, notwithstanding the laws of equality, prejudices exist as strongly as ever at Paris; and could a fortune be accumulated here as rapidly as in London, that fortune would never purchase the respect and consequence with which a similar acquisition is attended in England. A merchant (or "négociant," to use the french expression) is still an insignificant character in this town, and all the wealth of India would not place him on a level with a general, a minister, or a *ci-devant* noble.

A man of pleasure, or rather of dissipation, may, in all the joys of unbounded variety, destroy his health, viriate his principles, enervate his mind, and ruin his fortune. To the rich, however old, ugly, or deformed, beauty will not refuse her smiles; and every assembly is open to

him who, in the morning, will convey "madame" to milliners, jewellers, and lace merchants, and will devote his evenings to the *boulotte** of "monsieur."

The politician, or in other words, he who is anxious to become acquainted with the real causes of the present order of things, and to examine to their source the many-coloured events which have preceded it, will be much disappointed. The greater number of those who took an active part in the revolution, have been swept away in the general torrent; the few that remain, are either living in obscurity, and cautious of expressing their opinions, or become, like other apostates, as violent on one side as they were formerly on the other. Of course, no satisfactory information is to be derived from them. As to the general bulk of the nation, passive under the iron tyranny of that sanguinary monster, Robespierre, they preferred, at that time, the accidental hope of individual escape, to the generous and braver conduct of a bold resistance. They are still the same people; and, now that their tranquillity and private happiness are secured, they look on in perfect apathy, and (if the term were not too rash) I should add, in sulky content.

* *Boulotte* is a gambling game much played at Paris, and said to be the support of several families.

Should France be deprived of Bonaparte, a circumstance which frenchmen of all parties allow would be at present a great national misfortune, I have no doubt that obedience would be quietly and generally yielded to whatever party should seize the reins of power. It is universally allowed, that there is no security beyond the life of the first consul*; yet no one proposes, and I am sure no one thinks of providing against an event, which, in the order of nature, must sooner or later arrive. You cannot, living in England, form an idea of the indifference prevalent here about public matters.

The time of Robespierre, or "la regne de la terreur," as it is commonly called, is often the subject of conversation, and it is mentioned with as much disgust and horror as in other countries; yet it never seems to occur to any one, that in having been the tacit spectators and instruments of the murders committed at that time, the inhabitants of this country were parties to his crimes. But it is perhaps absurd to complain of the present want of feeling, when we recollect the

* This was, of course, written before the late changes in the government, which appear to provide against this event. I leave the remark unaltered, as, in the first place, this provision comes not from the people, but from the first consul himself. Secondly, this arrangement is only on paper, and if it last the life of Bonaparte, will scarcely be respected after his death.

strange unconcern with which, under the immediate terror and view of the *guillotine*, the persons confined in the different prisons, while they awaited their turn of cruelty, engaged in every sort of frivolous amusement. I have been assured, by those who were themselves in custody at that unhappy period, that toilets were made, parties planned, cards played, scandal talked of, assemblies arranged, and little jealousies entertained, in the very caverns of death. More than one person was taken from the dinner table, or the game of chess, to the place of execution. From a nation so strangely indifferent to its dearest interests, what intelligence can you expect to collect? If you ask a question relating to those dreadful moments, instead of a simple answer of facts, you receive a violent philippic against the memory of a man, too infamous even to deserve the honours of abuse. If you make an inquiry about the present constitution, you are laughed at, and, *pour toute réponse*, are told, " C'est Bonaparte qui fait tout—tout lui est soumis—tout lui est possible.*"

A gentleman and his wife, proposing to visit Paris, particularly if they happen to be attached to each other, and have no decided rank, ought carefully to provide themselves with all the letters

* It is Bonaparte who does every thing—every thing is submitted to him—every thing is possible for him.

of recommendation which they can possibly obtain, if they wish to be admitted into any of the houses of the parisians. They must remember, that every thing is calculated in this town, and that, if the female traveller will not conciliate the masters of families by her smiles, nor her husband by presents and attentions to the ladies, no door will be opened which is not forced open by the imperious command of some person, on whose power and interest the party depends. With the most insignificant title, or the lowest order of chivalry, something may be done, for these add to the splendour of an assembly; but without these advantages, and without vice, foreigners live but dully in this gay city. An english lady, of superiour talents, observed to me one day, with great truth, that she never discovered that her title of "countess" was of any use, till she entered the territory of the french republic. I ought also to mention, that it seldom happens in this country, that a person, to whom a stranger is recommended, thinks it necessary to present him to another. Of course, the number of acquaintance will not exceed that of the letters with which a foreigner is favoured. It may be doubtful, whether all of these will be attended to; but, at any rate, the houses of those to whom he is addressed will form the limits of his society. Families coming here with children, will have great advantages

in procuring them education. Masters in every science, and in every language, may be had at a very easy expense. The only antidote is the temptation to pleasure. Under a certain age, no place can be so well suited to the purposes of instruction.

Having taken a hasty view of the different situations in which this town may be visited, I shall conclude my subject by enumerating in what I conceive London is superiour to Paris, and in what Paris is superiour to London.

In width, cleanliness, and beauty, the streets of London have such a decided advantage over those of Paris, that I believe even a frenchman would acknowledge, that the question could not be disputed. The footpaths of the former, on which the pedestrian may walk without danger or dirt; the excellent pavement, which prevents any fatigue from being experienced in the use of a carriage; and the brilliance of the lamps at night, which renders the passage, in an evening, from one part of the town to another, rather a pleasure than a pain, are but ill contrasted by the narrow and filthy lanes of the latter, in which persons on foot are constantly exposed to every kind of accident and inconvenience; to the neglected carriage ways, in moving over which individuals are bruised, and wheels rapidly worn out; and to the dismal and uncertain light, which a few lanterns, hung by cords suspended from the

opposite houses, faintly affords. But if the streets of Paris must yield to those of London, the former city is undoubtedly superiour in its palaces and public buildings, and in the height, style, and architecture of private houses, the stone fronts, regular plan, and lofty dimensions of which, have a very commanding appearance. But though the edifices are finer, and the arrangement more convenient, each floor consisting of a complete set of rooms, yet, from their great size, it usually happens that the same house is inhabited by several families, and the stairs, consequently, becoming public, are as dirty and as disgusting as the common streets. Where too an individual keeps an entire house in his possession, the number of his servants is rarely proportioned to the size of his habitation, and either only a part is occupied, or the whole is neglected and in bad order.

I cannot help adding, as a singular circumstance, that notwithstanding the extensive and superiour scale on which private hotels are built at Paris, I have seldom seen open, at an assembly here, either as many rooms, or those of such large dimensions, as are met with, on similar occasions, in families of rank and fashion in London. The reason of this apparent contradiction, perhaps, is this, that as but one floor (whether others belong to the same person or not) is generally made use of, the bed rooms,

offices, and antichamber, occupy too large a space to allow much extent for the apartments devoted to the reception of company. From the opposite reason, it often happens that a house in London, of moderate size, has several large rooms, in which a numerous society may be entertained, though these rooms are scattered on different floors.

In respect to furniture, the houses of the "*parvenus*" are elegantly and splendidly fitted up. Most of the other private hotels have received little improvement, repair, or alteration, since the beginning of the revolution, and are consequently not very remarkable, either for freshness or novelty of taste. Carpets are not common; and though the beds are generally better, and in a more ornamental form, than those usually seen in England, and the antique shapes are most classically imitated in the decoration of these, and in the chairs, or *fauteuils;* yet, in other respects, I think our modern manner of fitting up houses has the advantage over that which generally prevails at Paris. Mahogany, so commonly used in England for dinner tables, is seldom applied to that purpose in France; and, as the cloth is never removed, they are made of deal. *En revanche* it forms, instead of gold, the frames of satin furniture; and the walls of drawing rooms are often ornamented with that wood. I cannot say, I admire ma-

hogany thus employed; but this is entirely a matter of taste. Plate glass is, of course, very superiour, and infinitely more common in the decoration of rooms than in England; yet, with this exception, and a few others, I think our apartments in London are more completely furnished, are much cleaner, and have many little comforts which are wanting in those of Paris. Some particular houses here do, indeed, present models of taste, profusion, and luxury, unequalled by any of ours; but the number of these is very trifling, and alters but little the general result.

The eating rooms of french houses are very disgusting. Instead of the comfortable turkey carpet, handsome curtains, *stuccoed* walls, blazing fire, and ornamental sideboard, of a London parlour, the dinner is here served in a dark and gloomy apartment, called "*la salle à manger*," imperfectly heated with a stove, the floor generally of stone, and always without a carpet, the windows without curtains or shutters, and the whole dirty and uninviting. Where there is not a separate antichamber, the servants occupy the dining rooms in the absence of their masters; and, in that case, the smell, which such company are apt to leave, is extremely offensive.

Of the assemblies I have already spoken. Excepting a great ball given by madame Recamier, where there was a crowd of three or four hundred

persons of different classes, with only a standing or *sandwich* supper, and a superb fête given by monsieur de Dimidoff, a rich russian, I have heard of no very numerous party. The balls generally consist of from fifty to a hundred people. Those at which I was present, appeared rather calculated to show the dancing and dress of the ladies, then to promote general gayety or diversion. In splendour of *costume*, and in graceful movements, our entertainments of this sort must yield to those of Paris; but in general mirth, in decorations, in supper, and brilliancy of light, the comparison is decidedly in favour of the former. The constant fluctuation also which takes place in London, from the number of engagements of each individual, gives a variety which is wanting in a french party, at which all the invited pass their whole evening.

The *thés*, which answer, in some respects, to our card parties, are infinitely less in number than the latter. The conversation of the former is, undoubtedly, on subjects more worthy of occupying the attention of rational beings, than the senseless *chit chat* of our fashionable *coteries*. It is only to be regretted, that the desire of speaking on literary subjects with *éclat*, so generally prevalent at Paris, not unfrequently degenerates into pedantry and affectation. Hence the tasteless coiner of pompous sentences is often mistaken for a man of genius; and the chattering

ostentatious coxcomb is admired, while the silence of modesty, and the reflection of good sense, expose those, in whom they are discovered, sometimes to ridicule, and always to neglect. The conversation, too, is commonly monopolised by a few, and the rest of the company yawn away their evening uninterested and uninteresting. On this subject the higher classes, of both countries, might improve, by observing the faults of each other; those of England, in rendering the topics of their conversation less trifling; and those of France, by letting ideas, instead of expressions, occupy their attention.

The concerts here are dull and tiresome entertainments, which last five or six hours uninterruptedly. Young ladies are often the principal performers, and admired rather in proportion to their rank and fashion than to the harmony of their voice, or the scientifical proficiency which they have made in the study of music. As we have generally in London the first italian masters, and the most distinguished singers, I conceive that our amusements of this sort must be superiour to those of Paris.

Of the *spectacles* I have fully spoken in a former letter. I shall, therefore, be as concise as possible at present. The opera of Paris is superiour to that of London in dancing and decoration; but the latter, in point of brilliance, gayety, music, beauty, and elegance of company, has

such an advantage over the former, that it may be justly said to be, in the language of Shakspeare, "Hyperion to a satyr." As to the play-houses, the comic performers in France possess a degree of extraordinary merit, and of professional skill, which I do not conceive any theatre of Europe can equal; but if they have attained a higher point of perfection than our actors in that line, I think our tragedians as decidedly exceed the french in simplicity of diction and of manner, in the just representation of human passions, and, above all, in taking nature for their guide, which, in assuming the buskin, the latter seem entirely to forget. As to the general state of the *spectacles* as public places, those of London are infinitely gayer, but those of Paris more orderly, and less subject to riots, indecency, and disturbance.

The walks, or *promenades*, of both these great cities, are delightful. Ours have the singular merit of being pleasant even in winter; and, besides, our large streets, the footways of which, even after rain, are soon dry, with the gardens of our various squares and inns of court, St. James's and Hyde park offer constant and beautiful spots for exercise. At Paris, there are no *trottoirs;* and the Thuilleries, Champs Elisées, and Boulevards, are almost impassable for foot passengers in bad weather. When the spring begins, the scene changes, and this city then boasts some charming gardens, which I have al-

ready enumerated, and which are well frequented. In my opinion, however, there is nothing here to be compared either with Hyde park or Kensington gardens.

For excursions round the town, the neighbourhood of London seems to afford more variety and picturesque views than that of Paris; but the vicinity of both cities is very beautiful.

The hours of the two capitals are now so nearly alike, that it is unnecessary to draw a comparison between them. No genteel family at Paris dines before four or five o'clock, and some persons not till six or seven. The *thés* begin about nine, the balls at twelve. The theatres commence at seven, and are generally over between ten and eleven.

The shops of London, as well as every kind of trade and manufactory, are so decidedly superiour to those of Paris, that it would be ridiculous to make the subject a question of doubt. There have been, however, some very elegant "*magazins*" (or shops) lately opened in la Rue de la Loi (ci-devant de Richelieu), particularly that of M. le Roi, and another called "la Maison de la Providence," nearly opposite *la Rue de Feydeau.*

Hackney coaches are a convenience which both these cities enjoy in great perfection. Those of Paris have improved so much since the revolution, that I conceive them now to be su-

periour to ours, both in carriages and horses. The fare for one distance (or "*course*,") whether long or short, provided it be within the gates of Paris, is *thirty sols* (or one shilling and three-pence english). There are, besides these, "*cabriolets*," or open carriages, constantly plying, which are not only good, but uncommonly elegant. They are equal to the best appointed gigs of private persons in London. The horses are fleet, and the drivers civil. The fare is something more than that of a "fiacre," or hackney coach.

The "hôtels garnis" are not so good or so numerous as they were formerly; but I think them still better than our houses of the same kind in London. There is also a privacy in a french apartment (the outward door of each making a distinct habitation), which gives it a decided advantage over the lodgings of an english hotel.

The public rooms and private *cabinets* of "restaurateurs," are certainly more elegantly fitted up than the apartments of our taverns or coffeehouses. The cooking of the former is better, and presents a much greater variety of dishes, and the affixed price to each article, makes the price of a dinner depend entirely on the choice of him by whom it is ordered.

As to society, that material ingredient in the happiness of man, of which every one who has

a head or heart, feels the vast importance, I conceive that foreigners arriving either in London or in Paris, without pressing recommendations or exalted rank, may be much embarrassed, and may in both places pass months and even years, without making one proper acquaintance. Yet it appears to me that there is this great and distinguishing difference between the manners of the two capitals, that a person properly introduced to a few families of fashion in London, will rapidly find his way into every society which he wishes to frequent, whereas, in Paris, however well individuals may be received in one or two of the most esteemed houses, that circumstance will not contribute to their introduction to any others, and if a stranger arrives with a certain number of recommendations, he may, after a six months residence, quit Paris without having increased the list of his acquaintance. I speak on this subject from experience. Besides a near relation of my own, two or three families* long

* Among the old friends of my family, from whom we received particular kindness, I shall be pardoned for naming madame (la ci-devant comtesse) d'H—t, so frequently mentioned in the confessions of *Jean Jacques*, and the real model on which he formed his imaginary Héloise. We had the pleasure of passing some days at her country seat, in the valley of Montmorency, and several evenings at her hotel at Paris. This accomplished woman, who at the age of thirty, had the talent to attract, and the virtue to resist the affection of Rousseau, has still at seventy, that amiability of

connected with mine, have still establishments here, and live in the best company of the place. By all of these Mrs. —— and myself were well and hospitably received, but the persons whom we met at their houses, neither paid us visits, or in other respects showed us the most trifling civilities.

Madame de St—l, is the only new acquaintance to whom we are indebted for a polite and hospitable reception, which indeed every foreigner of character is sure to find at her house, which on account of the public characters often seen there, on account of the rational conversation, and general gayety which always prevail, and above all, on account of the distinguished wit and universal politeness of " madame," is the most agreeable of Paris.

Having thus drawn a comparative statement of the advantages and disadvantages of these cities, principally viewed as places either of study or of

manner, that suavity of disposition, and that fund of enlightened conversation, which, notwithstanding the disadvantages of a person far from handsome, gained her the love of that extraordinary man. The latter has been very unjust in the character which he has drawn of the husband of this lady. He is still living, and is a respectable man of ancient family, independent fortune, and irreproachable reputation. *St. Lambert*, the Thomson of France, resides with Mr. and madame d'H—t, and his extreme old age receives from their attention the comforts and kindness of unvarying friendship.

amusement, I shall be excused for adding a few words on the state of charitable institutions, though they do not immediately form part of my subject.

Our hospitals and asylums for suffering poverty, are too well known, and stand on too high a basis to require any eulogium from me. I am happy to add, that those of Paris have not been neglected during the united horrors of war and revolution. A respectable physician (not a frenchman) assures me, that even during the most barbarous moments of the sanguinary Robespierre, these useful establishments were not abandoned. By a strange contradiction, while virtue and innocence were daily dragged to the scaffold, misery here found a refuge from the agonies of pain, and the menaces of disease. These institutions are now kept up with liberality, and every possible attention. Besides several others the medical gentleman in question particularly praises "l'Hôtel Dieu, rue du Marché Palu," where from fifteen hundred to two thousand sick persons receive the advice of the ablest physicians, and are treated with the most delicate care. The government, and the persons particularly entrusted with the management of this establishment, show the most laudable zeal in its support. "L'Hospice St. Louis" is an excellent appendage to this, to which those whose complaints are contagious are immediately removed. He next commends

" l'Hospice de la Pitie, rue Fossés St. Victor," behind " *le Jardin des Plantes*," the refuge of distressed innocence, in which two thousand children of soldiers, who died in the service of their country, are rescued from misery, and comfortably supported. " L'Hospice de St. Sulpice, rue de Sévres," originally built by madame Necker, in which one hundred and twenty sick, and eighteen wounded persons are relieved. " L'Hospice des Incurables," where the doom of these unhappy wretches is softened by an extensive garden ; and " l'Hospice de la Salpétrière," built by Louis XIII, and maintained at present in all its original grandeur. The building is fine, presenting a majestic *façade*, and its boundaries are so extensive that it is almost a little city. Here sixteen hundred girls are employed in making linen and in working lace. Old married men, young women affected with madness, and female ideots here receive those little comforts, of which their respective situations still allow them to partake.

Requesting you to pardon this digression I shall conclude my subject with a few short observations drawn from my former remarks.

To those who are fond of the arts, and who devote their time to the pursuit, Paris offers objects of great interest and unequalled beauty. Persons who pass their lives in a career of dissipation, who are satisfied with public amusements, bought pleasures, and high play, will find here,

decked in all the joys of variety, the means of gratifying their favourite wishes. To such as come to view the curiosities of the place, Paris will appear delightful during a residence of two or three months, as that time will be fully and agreeably occupied in examining its various institutions, and in visiting its different theatres, particularly if the traveller arrives in the beginning of spring, when the charms of nature are added to those of art. But to him whose attachments are centred within the circle of his own family, who is fond of the investigation of truth, and whose early days have been passed in the polished societies of London, Paris, after its great and striking beauties have once been sufficiently viewed, will appear comparatively tame, dull, and uninteresting. He will daily miss the freedom of conversation, which is so generally prevalent in England; he will look in vain for that manly sense, with which great national questions are discussed by men of education in London, he will be irritated by the flippancy of french politicians, and by the pedantic terms and laboured sentences, which take the place of sound argument and solid reasoning. He will find the amusements rather various than splendid. He will find society difficult when it is good, and dangerous when it is easy*. He will admire the grace

* There are innumerable houses at Paris, in which, with every appearance of respectability, and often with the assist-

and elegance of the ladies, and will look with an eye of pity, if not of contempt, on the indelicacy of their dress. He will hear "la bonne compagnie" talked of in every set, and never defined. He will perhaps at last discover that it only exists, where it does not assume the name, or as Voltaire, says,

"Qui ne s'appelle pas la bonne compagnie, mais qui l'est."

He will view with wonder and admiration the works of art, and see with no little pleasure and curiosity the extraordinary man now at the head of government. Such will be his principal sources of satisfaction at Paris. He will soon discover that every thing else, however blazoned out in the trappings of grandeur, or vamped up in the colouring of hyperbole, is only "air and empty nothing."

Adieu, my dear sir, I propose setting out to-morrow morning for Lyons and Switzerland. You will, therefore, not hear from me again till I am far distant from this capital. I came here big with hope, and eager in expectation. I re-

ance of some lofty sounding title, the unwary stranger often finds his ruin. Amidst the smiles of beauty, the splendour of foreign orders, the jollity of wine, and the gaiety of dancing, youth loses its prudence, and one evening's entertainment is paid by the loss of that fortune, on which his happiness, and perhaps that of many dear relatives depended.

joice at having undertaken the journey, as it has afforded me much useful information, but I leave Paris without regret, and with but little desire of a speedy return.

I am, &c.

THE END.

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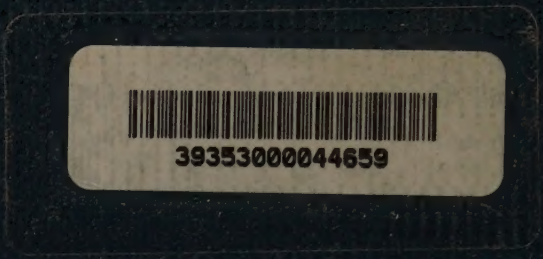
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